

This lively part of the town can always offer an abundance of choices for bar lovers. **Page 14**



The Rolling Stones live on stage in China is a dream about to come true for local rock and roll fans. **Page 11**



Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tales are a source of inspiration for Lu Xue's paper-cutting. **Page 9**



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## From Bronze to Riches

The opening of the exhibition offers Wang Qinning, Wang Ningxian, Wang Laqian, Wang Mingsuo and Zhang Qinhui their first chance to admire the ancient bronzeware.

By Xiao Rong

A shovel or two of dirt uncovered 27 priceless artifacts and changed the lives of five peasants.

"It's totally good luck," says Wang Laqian, 46, shyly pulling at one end of his dark blue suit, donned in honor of his first ever visit to Beijing.

Wang, together with four colleagues, Wang Ningxian, Wang Mingsuo, Zhang Qinhui and Wang Qinning, were treated to a special trip to the capital last Sunday to attend the opening of an exhibition of the bronzeware artifacts they unearthed in their hometown in Mei County, Shaanxi Province on January 19.

In an unprecedented gesture, the five have been awarded 20,000 yuan each by the local government, the first time ever for individuals to receive such a big prize for reporting the discovery of relics to the government.

"We must ensure that those who honestly report such finds get rich overnight," said Zhang Tinghao, director of the Shaanxi Cultural Relics Bureau, at Sunday's opening of the exhibition at the China Millennium Monument.

### Lucky find

Described by some archeologists as "one of the greatest finds of the 21st century," the true value of the artifacts was not immediately apparent to the five.

"We were just digging in a brickyard in the north of our village," says Wang Qinning, who with Zhang Qinhui was at the base of the hill driving a tractor.

The other three, Wang Laqian, Wang Mingsuo and Wang Ningxian, were on the hill digging. Wang told *Beijing Today* he felt there was something unusual as his shovel struck a hard object. "The sound was different," he says.

He shoveled out two more loads of earth, and an opening appeared. In the late afternoon sun, something seemed to be shining inside.

"I thought at first it was a grave, but when I looked into the opening, I could see a kind of cave and there were several cooking vessels covered in green rust in a neat pile," says Wang Mingsuo. "I thought then they might be cultural relics."

It was almost dark by this stage and the five decided to send Wang Ningxian to return home to call the local cultural relics administration, while the other four guarded their discovery.

"We covered the opening with dirt, so no passers-by would notice it," says Zhang Qinhui. "There are always relics dealers coming through the village, because it is famous for unearthed bronzeware."

It took Wang Ningxian over 40 minutes to get onto the cultural relics bureau in Baoji. Finally, Chen Liang, the official on duty, picked up the

24-hour hotline.

"I just told him my name and said we might have found some treasures in Yangjia village," says Wang Ningxian.

Baoji cultural relics bureau immediately sent three Mei County officials to the village to appraise the find.

"When we arrived at Wang Ningxian's house, he was so cautious, he asked for my work identification," said Zhao Junliang, one of the officials from the Mei County cultural bureau.

Zhao Junliang and his two colleagues realized straight away that it was an important find and made a report requesting immediate excavation.

"Without the vigilant protection by the five peasants," said Zhao Junliang, "the cave would not have been so completely preserved, which is extremely important for archaeological research."

### Sudden riches

A total of 27 pieces of rare bronzeware, dating back to the Western Zhou Dynasty (1066 BC-771BC), were unearthed in the cave, including cooking vessels, kettles, plates and jars, all large in size and delicately carved.

All 27 artifacts have inscriptions engraved on them, ranging from 11 to 372 characters.



Wang Ningxian, Wang Mingsuo, Wang Laqian and Wang Qinning at the site of the find in Mei County, Shaanxi Province. Photos by Lily

The discovery is the largest of its kind, in terms of the number of pieces, their size and the quantity of the inscriptions.

"The find is of extreme significance for the study of the late Western Zhou Dynasty," commented historian Li Xueqin. "I was stunned when I saw the pieces."

In consideration of the great value of the find, Shaanxi Cultural Relics Bureau and Baoji municipal government jointly awarded 200,000 yuan to the individuals responsible and their work units. The five peasants received half the prize, with each getting 20,000 yuan.

"It's the biggest prize the government has ever awarded to individuals who have contributed to the discovery of relics," says Zhao Xinghai, director of the cultural bureau of Mei County.

Zhao told *Beijing Today* that several important artifact finds have been made since 1949 in Mei County's Yangjia village and surrounding area.

In earlier cases of finds being reported to the government, those who found the relics usually received only a token reward.

"While at the same time, relics dealers or smugglers in Shaanxi Province are always seeking to illegally buy relics," Zhao continues.

The number of calls to the county government hotline reporting relics findings skyrocketed after news of the 20,000-yuan-each rewards came out, says Zhao.

### Big change

Talking about their big prize, the five just smiled shyly, and said that for them, it was a big fortune.

Wang Laqian says he did not expect such a large sum of money. "We have often joked about digging up relics," says Zhang Qinhui. "This time, we really did strike it rich!"

He agreed that unearthed relics should belong to the country. "We know from TV and radio programs that cultural relics should be well protected. We cannot violate the law by hiding the treasures and selling them to relics dealers."

The five had earlier agreed to share equally any prize they received, even though Wang Qinning and Zhang Qinhui were not directly at the site at the time.

With annual incomes averaging 1,500 yuan, the 20,000-yuan prize is really a windfall for all five. Apart from repaying debts, some are planning to use the money to start a small business, such as breeding livestock.

"Some of our fellow villagers may envy our good luck, but most of our relatives and friends support us," says Wang Mingsuo.

"I know relics can be sold for high prices, but we cannot do such illegal things. If I find more cultural relics in the future, I will do the same thing," says Wang Ningxian.

## Reuters Staff Held Hostage in Bomb Scare

By Xiao Rong

A man claiming to have a bomb held several staff at Reuters news agency's Beijing bureau hostage for about two hours Wednesday morning, before releasing them unharmed.

The intruder entered the sixth floor office in the Sunflower Building, in the east of Beijing, and demanded to be interviewed on camera about his grievances, according to Reuters.

Armed police cordoned off the 25-story building after Reuters staff called for help at about 10:30. Other employees in the building were all evacuated and gathered beyond the yellow cordons. Many appeared not to know why they had been evacuated.

"We heard the siren sound twice and the building administration broadcast a warning to everybody to leave the building," an employee from Qianlong website told *Beijing Today*.

Two staff members from China Construction Group said they learned from a colleague at the time that someone was threatening to bomb the Reuters office on the sixth floor.

Beijing police spokesman Liu Wei announced at about 1 o'clock that the man, who had identified himself as Fang Qinghui, was from Yichun, Heilongjiang Province. Liu confirmed that all Reuters staff were safe and police were continuing to negotiate with the man.

Later Liu said the man had surrendered shortly after 2 pm and that the bomb was a hoax.

Huang Minxiang is in the custody of Beijing police.



## Campus Blast Suspect Identified

Police brought to Beijing last Saturday afternoon the man suspected of setting off bombs on the campuses of two Beijing universities on February 25.

The suspect, Huang Minxiang, arrived in Beijing from Fuzhou Saturday in police custody, said an official with the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau.

Huang, who has confessed to being responsible for the two explosions, was seized in Fuzhou, capital of east China's Fujian Province, shortly after midnight Saturday. The 27-year-old is employed in Qionghshan, a town in south China's Hainan Province.

"The reason for choosing those two universities was that they are renowned institutions. I'd be famous if I could make explosions there," Huang told Beijing police on Saturday.

The police investigation found that Huang came to Beijing on February 19. Using gunpowder removed from firecrackers, he made simple detonators in a hotel room. He left Beijing by train on the afternoon of the explosions and arrived at his parents' home in Fuzhou three days later.

The two blasts rocked cafeterias on the campuses of Beijing and Qinghua universities, injuring nine students and staff.

Xinhua

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# White Paper Blueprints Commerce in Capital

By Zhao Hongyi

In the future, the core of the capital will be home to chain stores, major franchises, exotic restaurants, supermarkets, convenience stores and discount shops. Within Beijing's Second Ring Road, large shopping malls, restaurants and entertainment facilities, will be restricted from opening in residential communities.

This is all according to a white paper, regulations good for at least this year, released by the Municipal Commerce Commission last Friday.

Besides naming areas where business will be encouraged, discouraged or restricted, the paper also stipulates that the city will expand its ranks of newer types of businesses, including franchises, consumer credit firms, delivery services and auto dealerships.

Within residential communities, businesses such as breakfast outlets, boutique restaurants, house keeping and cleaning services and waste sorting and recycling services will be welcomed.

Yan Ligang, spokesman of the com-

mission, explained the restriction of certain projects within the Second Ring Road means that no such projects will be approved this year.

The government's aim is to reach a figure of 200 billion yuan in annual retail sales citywide and to introduce another 200 billion yuan of overseas investment to Beijing's commercial sector.

"We are planning to establish 400 small supermarkets and convenient stores, 800 breakfast outlets and 700 recycling centers in the hundreds of

residential communities in the city," said Yan.

The government also perceives demand for 1,400 franchise chain stores and medium-sized supermarkets and at least 10 large-scale shopping malls around the city.

"Our target is to build up a full-size and fully-functional modern logistics framework in the city," said Liang Wei, director-general of the Municipal Commerce Commission, "in keeping with the city's process of becoming an international metropolis."

## Berlin Water Works with Beijing

By Ema Ma

Germany-based Berlin Water Group signed a contract with Beijing Urban Construction on Tuesday to cooperate in water supply and sewage treatment projects and other water services in the city. It is the first cooperative agreement signed since the policy to accelerate the market-orientation of public utilities was issued by the Ministry of Construction at the end of last year.

Following the reform of the power, civil aviation and telecommunication industries, other formerly non-profitable, inefficient, government-monopolized municipal public industries, such as water, heating, gas, waste treatment, infrastructure and public transportation, are opening their doors to outside influence, involvement and investment.

Because public utilities tend to take a long time to show return on the huge investments involved, ministry policy allows foreign investors to have the rights to financing, construction and operation for a period of 20 years.

Only 30 percent of urban wastewater in China can currently be treated, a figure the government wants to raise to 70 percent by 2010.



A man walks past a poster of the first twin towers to be built in Shanghai on March 11. With an investment of 2 billion yuan, the 54-storey, 230-meter high towers will be completed in 2005 and become a landmark on the west of the Huangpu River. Xinhua Photo

## Drug Makers Move to Control Bad Deals

By Ema Ma

On Monday, the R&D-based Pharmaceutical Association of China announced the issuance of its upgraded Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices, which governs the marketing practices of its 42 member companies, including global giants Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline and Bayer Healthcare.

Drug company representatives offering off-the-books commissions, discounts or other benefits in the course of sales deals have been called the most fundamental cause of the sky-high medicine prices in this country. Drug prices average

10 to 20 times, and up to 100 times, above cost.

Included in the code are stipulations that information in promotional materials should be up-to-date, scientifically valid and in no way misleading, and that pharmaceutical ads should not contain any false information, assurances of efficacy, or comparisons with other products.

According to the State Economic and Trade Commission, foreign pharmaceutical companies' sales have accounted for an average of one third of all drug sales in this country in the past few years.

## Siemens Takes Aim at China's Football

By Xiao Rong

Siemens has scored again in China's football industry by becoming the chief sponsor of the First Division Group A of the Chinese National Football League.

The company's sponsorship was announced last Thursday in Guangzhou by the Chinese Football Association (CFA) and Siemens Telecom Group. The league's 2003 season has been called the "2003 Siemens Mobile Football League".

In February, Siemens also emerged as the sponsor of "Team China", made up of seven national football squads including the men's, women's and youth teams.

Rudi Lamprecht, chairman of Siemens Group, said at the press conference that the company is striving to create a

dynamic image by supporting football.

The contract between the CFA and Siemens is valid for one year, but neither side has revealed the exact monetary figures involved. Some football insiders have estimated Siemens paid \$8 million for the sponsorship rights.

What is known, though, is that Siemens paid far less than the CFA's previous sponsor, Pepsi-China, which suddenly announced the termination of its contract last December, accusing the CFA and its sole agent, International Management Group (IMG), of disregarding the company's interests.

According to the original five-year agreement between IMG and Pepsi, due to expire at the end of this year, Pepsi

should have paid 140 million dollars for the 2003 season. The company's withdrawal forced IMG to seek a new sponsor.

As part of the deal, Siemens will also have the privilege to continue sponsorship next year when the 10-year-old CFA changes its name to the China Premier Football League.

"We will earn profits in the China market by focusing on brand building," said Ren Weiguang, Asia-Pacific vice chairman of Siemens Mobile, who expects the football sponsorships to prove profitable.

Siemens ranked fourth in mobile phone sales in the China market last year and has invested over \$60 million in its Shanghai factory to increase annual handset production capacity to 14 million units.

which has accepted the case and will commence hearings on April 2.

Representatives of AOL Time Warner claim to have purchased a DVD of the movie *Collateral Damage* in a CAT Makro store in October 2001. Tianjin Culture Videodisc was responsible for copying the DVD, legally AOL Time Warner property. The US media giant has requested the court rule that Tianjin Culture Videodisc halt the publishing,

copying and distribution of any copyrighted DVD products, hand over all the illegal DVDs it has in stock, made a public apology and pay compensation of 390,350 yuan.

In the same CTA Makro store, Universal City Studios employees purchased a DVD of *A Beautiful Mind* copied by Pacific Audio and Video. The company is seeking similar legal action as AOL Time Warner and has made the same demands.

## Crude Oil Price Hikes Impacts Airfares

By Ema Ma

Over the past month, many foreign airlines have increased ticket prices to cover rising fuel costs as international crude oil prices have hit record highs.

The NYMEX crude oil future price has held at \$36 to \$37 per barrel in the past two weeks, almost 1.5 times higher than last year's average price. Airline companies have responded quickly by hiking airfares. Air France increased the price of flights within France by three percent on March 6. As of March 1, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines has added a 10 euro fuel charge to every ticket worldwide, while Air Canada has tacked on a 200 yuan fuel charge to its tickets since March 4.

A report in *Beijing Youth Daily* on March 8 said Air China, China Eastern Airlines, China Southern Airlines and nine foreign airlines have applied to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region's Civil Aviation Department to levy fuel charges of HK\$40 to HK\$100 on flights to and from

Hong Kong.

Beginning February 10, fuel charges on domestic flights have increased five percent to six percent in accordance with a notice previously issued by the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC). So far there are no indications that domestic airfares will undergo further adjustment.

Following the mechanism that matches domestic air ticket prices with crude oil prices that has been in effect since November 2000, the State Development Planning Commission currently announces guidance prices for jet fuel when international oil prices surpass certain limits. However, these changes do not keep up completely with international market fluctuations, as adjustments are normally made around one month after prices go up or down.

Domestic airlines are highly susceptible to losses from international oil price changes because the lack of an oil futures market in China gives them no buffer from price hikes.



Xinhua Photo

## Fuzzy Ambassadors Sent to Austria

On March 13, pandas Yang Yang and Long Hui were flown from Sichuan Province to Vienna, Austria where they will live for the 10 years.

Xinhua Photo

## What Is a Small Enterprise?

By Ema Ma

The benchmarks for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have been issued by the State Economic and Trade Commission (SETC) and three other government bodies, as announced on their websites this week. This new definition is intended to add to the feasibility of the Rules to Promote the Small and Medium Enterprises, released by the National People's Congress in June 2002 and which have been effective since January 1.

The benchmarks are formulated based on a company's number of employees and other indexes such as sales and total assets. Using staff numbers as the priority benchmark follows international practices, as 90 percent of the countries in the world use head numbers as the main standard for defining SMEs.

An official from the SETC who requested anonymity said the government is striving to support small and medium enterprises out of consideration of their important role as employers. SMEs employ 75 percent of China's working urban population.

The former benchmark, issued in 1998, did not cover tertiary industries such as logistics, fields in which most SMEs are engaged.

## City Focuses on Logistics Leadership

By Zhao Hongyi

Construction of the Beijing Airport Logistics Zone began last Saturday, just a few months after the Chaoyang Logistics Port began operation. In the capital's logistics development push, another two distribution hubs are slated to open this year.

Logistics services are one of the city's development priorities this year, and have been called "an urgent need" by the municipal government. The construction of the airport logistics hub is expected to be completed by October 1 this year.

Nine companies, including Shaungcheng Yicheng Express Network (Zhai Ji Song Express), Sino Santa Fe and Beijing Post, have signed contracts to move in to the 6.2 square kilometer zone near the Beijing Capital International Airport, which will be a center for the collection and distribution of goods for import and export by plane.

Late last year, the Chaoyang Logistics Port along the Beijing-Tianjin-Tanggu highway went into operation, focusing on facilitating export deliveries to the port in Tianjin for maritime transportation.

The other two logistics zones, one in Tongzhou District and the other in Fangshan District, will collect cargo for railway transportation and should be up and running within this year.

The airport logistics zone has significant geographical advantages, as its location along the newly built Sixth Ring Road means it will offer access to the Beijing Tianzhu Airport Industrial Zone, Beijing Tianzhu Export Processing Zone, Hyundai Auto Park, North China Micro Electronic Base, and several of the major venues for the 2008 Olympic Games.

## Steps Started to Set Up State Oil Reserves

By Shan Jinliang

In anticipation of the start of war in Iraq, China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (SinoPec) has launched a series of preliminary steps to create national oil reserves in Yizheng, Jiangsu Province. Construction of these initial projects will start next month, according to a 21st Century Economic Herald report published last Wednesday.

The final decision whether or not to establish national oil reserves rests with the State Development Planning Commission, but to date the commission has not made any confirmed statements one way or the other.

Mr. Wang, a public relations officer from SinoPec Xuzhou Reserves Company, who declined to give his full name, said a project team has been sent to Yizheng, 80 kilometers from Jiangsu's capital of Nanjing, aimed at expanded current oil reserves from over 500,000 cubic meters to two million cubic meters. The expanded amount is nearly the equivalent of the annual production of a mid-sized domestic oil field. Most of the company's added reserves will come from imports.

Reports in *International Financial News* last month said China's top three oil suppliers, SinoPec, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) are planning to construct strategic oil reserves in different regions of the country.

# Toyota Points Finger at Geely

By Ema Ma

Beijing's major press carried stories recently about Toyota's 14-million-yuan lawsuit against Geely Group. The case, which was scheduled to be heard Wednesday at the Beijing No. 2 People's Intermediate Court, has been delayed as Geely has moved for it to be heard in Hangzhou, where the company is based.

The claim, about which Toyota remains low-key, is for compensation on the grounds of trademark infringement and unfair competition.

Geely, China's only private car manufacturer has launched a strongly worded counter attack to the charges. Following the release of a press statement titled "Toyota points finger at Geely," and a press conference held in Beijing to clarify Geely's position, the company issued a formal statement last Sunday to summarize its position.

Responding to Toyota's charge that "Likeness exists in the trademark of Toyota and Geely's Merrie auto," Geely lawyer Lou Tao said that Geely had registered the trademark with the State Trademark Office in 1996.

Furthermore, Lou said, as cars represent a big-ticket expenditure for most customers, the company would not set out to mislead by use of trademark that has the same "circular shape" Toyota mentioned in the indictment.

Toyota also charged that the slogan "Toyota's engine, affordable price" in an advertising pamphlet said out by two Geely dealers is inaccurate and constitutes unfair competition, and insisted that Geely cease the advertising campaign in the name of Toyota's engine immediately.

Geely chairman Li Shufu described the charge as ludicrous in an interview with *Beijing Youth Daily*, "We purchased the 8A-FE engine from Tianjin

Toyota Motor Engine (TTME) for about 400 million yuan when we started to produce the Merrie. The purchase contract can confirm that."

According to Geely's website, the engines in three of Geely's models; Uliou, Jmstar and Meirenbao are indeed produced by TTME. However, another two models, Haoqing and Merrie, use the 8A/MR479Q engine, produced by Geely's own engine company last year. Analysts say this fact will go against Geely at the hearing.

One intriguing aspect of the case is Toyota's timing, given that the Merrie has been on the market for four years. It is widely assumed in China that Toyota's recent launch of its Vios series, which uses the same engine as most Geely models, is a factor.

The Vios sells for around 110 thousand yuan, almost double the price of Geely's models. Moreover, the Vios series represents a vital

step in Toyota's future development in China. Sources within Geely, who declined to be named, maintain that "some foreign companies want to strangle the national auto industry in its cradle."

Toyota, meanwhile, has refused to comment further, saying that the legal process should settle the dispute.

According to Geely, the case was filed directly from Toyota's headquarter in Japan. The company's Beijing office was unaware of it until Geely tried to contact them.

The concern for Geely is that the perception it is a "copycat" manufacturer might start to stick, given that this is not the first such accusation. The front and headlight design of Geely is the very image of a Mercedes Benz, while the Meirenbao, which Geely proudly describes as China's first racing car, bears an obvious resemblance to a Ferrari.

# China Netcom Seeks to Break Mobile Monopolies

By Shan Jinliang

The days of China's two wireless telecom giants, China Mobile and China Unicom, monopolizing the market in Beijing are gone. China Netcom's Beijing branch, Beijing Communication, began selling PHS (Personal Handy-phone System) phones in Huairou District Monday.

PHS is a wireless phone technology with similar mobile business to China Unicom and China Mobile's. It has been defined as "an extension of fixed line phones" by the Ministry of Information Industry (MII), and fees are the same as those for fixed line telephones, less than half the price of calls made from mobile phone.

The handsets are also cheaper, mainly priced between 400 to 800 yuan. The low cost has pushed millions of people to choose PHS handsets, and by the end of last year, 13 million PHS handsets have been sold in China, mainly in rural areas and small and medium cities, according to a recent MII report.

With little promotion, Beijing Communication has sold around 100 call numbers every day since Monday, and it claims to be happy with the figures.

China Mobile and China Unicom, however, are not so happy. Now the PHS operators, China Telecom and Netcom are fighting for the same group of customers with China Mobile and China Unicom, and the breakthrough in Beijing has raised fears of profit cuts for the two wireless operators. Wall Street investors Monday sold off shares in the two companies, causing share prices to fall to their second lowest, for China



Lu Gang tries out his new PHS phone in front of a China Netcom office in Qingchun Road, Huairou District Monday.

Photo by Hu Xuebai

Mobile, and lowest, for China Unicom, in three years.

## Historical reasons

Market interests could serve as the leading force of China Telecom and Netcom to choose PHS. China Mobile and Unicom were listed on the Nasdaq in 1997 and 2000, respectively, and to safeguard their interests, the government decided to issue no more mobile phone licenses. Economic growth has since spurred the rapid growth of the mobile phone business, bringing large profits to the two companies.

At the same time, the growth of fixed line phones has slowed, and China Telecom and China Netcom have been forced to seek new areas of growth. The moratorium on issuing licenses forced them to turn to PHS technology. From December 1997, China Telecom began issuing PHS numbers in the small northern cities, and soon PHS spread to over 300 small and medium cities around the country, excluding Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou as the MII had forbidden use of PHS in the three cities' rural districts. But a permit to sell PHS handsets in Guangzhou and

'Technically speaking, it is not cost-saving to run PHS on a large scale, and PHS should not be seen as a future technology.'

— Wu Jichuan

Shanghai stirred interest in the Beijing market of China Telecom and China Netcom.

## Secretly for ambitious profits

Beijing Communication began to establish signal-receiving stations in Huilongguan, Changping District in mid-February, but it was soon stopped by the local government. Then late last week, MII minister Wu Jichuan told the press the government will neither encourage nor bar the operation of PHS, resulting in Beijing Communication launching another "experiment" in Huairou.

"We have not set a sales plan for Huairou," Tang Liuming, a PR official from Beijing Communication, told *Beijing Today* Wednesday. Analysts say Beijing Communication does not expect too much, they are simply testing the government's response. If the government takes no action, the company will presumably enlarge its current business.

Tang told *Beijing Today* they have not received any word from the government at this time.

## Long term strategy

Beijing Communication seems to

have bigger plans for Beijing. Li Litao, marketing manager of Beijing Communication, told *Beijing Times* Monday that the company had mapped out a long-term plan for PHS in the city's ten rural and eight urban districts, and the PHS network in all the rural districts has been established. Once the Huairou PHS handsets prove to be a success, the company will start developing it in the nearer Changping and Tongzhou Districts, Li added.

While Beijing Communication is happy with the current breakthrough, industry insiders say PHS could not be a long-term wireless service. Wu said, "Technically speaking, it is not cost-saving to run PHS on a large scale, and PHS should not be seen as a future technology." He suggested PHS should be only used in small and medium sized cities.

While PHS makers are trying to improve call quality, service level and the variety of handsets, media analysts say inability to be mobile between regions will prove to be the main barrier for PHS development.

Wang Meng, of leading telecom analysis organization BDA, says PHS will develop over three to five years. However when the four telecom giants are all permitted to run wireless telecom service, PHS will no longer be a favorite for China Telecom and Netcom.

# Intel Unveils Wireless Chip

By Shan Jinliang

Intel officially launched its new processor, known as Centrino, on Wednesday. The chip is designed specifically for notebook computer and incorporates high-speed wireless networking.

The move marks a change in emphasis for Intel, from speed-oriented to communication-oriented. Intel China general manager Yang Xu said although Centrino is not as fast as the Pentium 4, the development future is in wireless chips. Centrino will gradually take the place of the current Pentium 3 and 4.

Centrino equipped notebook computers will be able to connect to the Internet or to corporate networks simply by being within 100 meters of access points called "hot spots." Intel says it is working with partners such as telephone network operators, hotels and airports to ensure that some 10,000 hot spots are up to speed this year in 15 countries around the globe. Yang said Intel China will establish thousands of hot spots in cooperation with China Mobile, the biggest domestic wireless telecom operator.

Chinese computer makers have

already taken delivery of the new chips and started manufacturing Centrino-based computers. The new wi-fi (wireless fidelity) enabled notebooks expected to sell for around 17,000 yuan, the same price as the current Pentium 4 notebooks.

Some manufacturers have already reduced prices on current notebooks. Compaq cut its mainstream CY30 notebook on March 8 to 9,000 yuan, a 2,000-yuan reduction. Dell, Legend, Acer and ASUSTek have also either announced price cuts or said they will do so after the release of their Centrino based notebooks.

## Consortium Completes Largest NPL Portfolio Sale

By Tina Ling

A Morgan Stanley led consortium and China Huarong Asset Management Company yesterday announced the final regulatory approval and closing of the purchase from Huarong of a portfolio of non-performing loans (NPLs) totaling 10.8 billion yuan. The NPLs were acquired by a Sino-foreign joint venture between Morgan Stanley and Huarong.

The transaction is the largest portfolio sale of NPL assets in China's history and sets a number of additional precedents for the China NPL market. It is the first time international and domestic investors have cooperated to create an onshore joint venture to acquire Chinese NPLs.

The Morgan Stanley led consortium, involving Lehman Brothers, Salomon Smith Barney, KTH Capital Management and IFC, purchased four out of five pools of assets offered for sale by Huarong in 2001.

## Online Games Win Back Investment for Dot Coms

By Ema Ma

While the Nasdaq index is still falling, some of China's dot coms have found relief through short message services (SMS) and online gaming. A US \$40 million financing agreement between Shanda Networking and Softbank Asia in Shanghai Sunday makes it the biggest private placement in China's Internet industry.

Huang Xingsheng, general manager of Softbank Asia China said, "The return will be 10-fold in seven years."

Shanda began its own research and development in online games last May. The company's main source of income is the online game "Legend," the copyright of which belongs to South Korean company, Actoz Soft.

There is still a hidden figure behind the deal. The \$1.05 billion capital of Softbank Asia Infrastructure Fund is entirely provided by network equipment manufacturer Cisco Systems, which wants the fund to invest in the promising project based on broadband to boost sales of network hardware.

## Tom.com Sees Profits in Free Email

By Shan Jinliang

Hong Kong-based Tom.com announced Sunday it will offer free 10 megabyte email to its 163.net users from March. The move is aimed at generating more hits, which the company says will translate into increased income.

Tom.com was the first website to charge users in China for email boxes, following its acquisition of the website in 2001, and the move to offer free email comes as something of a surprise.

163.net currently has 700,000 registered email users, whom it charges between 10 and 25 yuan a month, depending on capacity and configuration of services, but "email boxes and online news are the efficient ways to increase the website," said Tom.com president Wang Leilei.

*Beijing Business Today* reported Monday that with the growing usage of email, many users find the five megabyte free email boxes provided by such popular portals as Yahoo are quickly filled, and the move by Tom.com will attract many surfers.

Wang said providing the service will not cost the company too much since the costs of servers, broadband and reserve have been cut by as much as 60 percent. He added the income brought from telecom value added services such as SMS will more than compensate.

Meanwhile an IT analyst from Netease commented that even with 20 megabyte free email boxes, such as Netease provide, it is not easy to attract new users.

## UTStarcom Acquisition Diversifies Business

By Shan Jinliang

China's largest PHS (Personal handy-phone System) manufacturer UTStarcom announced last Wednesday it had made a partial acquisition of CommWorks, a subsidiary of the US-based 3Com, for US \$100 million. The purchase marks a shift to a diversified business model while the prospect for PHS is still uncertain in China.

The acquisition price also sets a record for China's listed network companies. 3Com is one of the world's largest telecom providers, and CommWorks is the dominant player in the wireless data service, Wu Ying, UTStarcom CEO said last week. CommWorks lists among its clients 17 of the world's top 20 telecom companies, including AT&T, Sprint and British Telecom (BT).

UTStarcom used to be the world's major PHS manufacturer, with a 90 percent market share since PHS was introduced to China in 1997. But in the following years, the entry of other telecom companies' reduced UTStarcom's market share to 60 percent. Meanwhile it has been reported recently that more companies have plans to seek profits in PHS.

Uncertainty over policy could be a major factor behind the business shift, according to a report in last week's *Economic Observer*. In May 2000, the Ministry of Information Industry first prohibited the development of PHS in China, later issuing a regulation allowing its development in certain areas. UTStarcom's share price went down and up by over \$10 in one day.

"We will focus more on (telecom) services and expand ourselves mainly by acquiring other companies," said Wu, and the company will build itself into a true wireless telecom service provider.



Intel Mobile Platforms Group marketing director Don MacDonald cuts the cable on a computer in Beijing Wednesday, making the point that the new Centrino chip is designed for the wireless age. Xinhua Photo

# US Ready to Release SPR



The Strategic Petroleum Reserve Bryan Mound storage facility located in Brazoria County, Texas, is one of four sites that make up the US' oil reserve.

Reuters Photo

London, March 10 (Reuters) - The US is ready to act quickly to release crude from its strategic petroleum reserve (SPR) if national supplies are threatened and will not be guided by prices, Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham said.

But he said a decision to release stocks would only be made in the event of a supply emergency.

"We will contemplate making that decision only in case of severe disruption of supply... when we are certain we cannot get enough oil to meet national

needs," he said.

Industry and consumer groups have urged the US government to release crude oil from the emergency oil stockpile to help ease crude prices which have risen 50 percent to over \$40 a barrel since November on fears of a US-led war to disarm oil-producing Iraq.

Abraham said the US government would also consult with the International Energy Agency, the energy watchdog for the world's industrialized countries, before deciding to release SPR oil.

Abraham said price was not a consideration in deciding whether to use the reserves, and refused to comment on whether military action against Iraq and the stoppage of its two million barrels per day of output would in itself constitute a supply emergency. (Sujata Rao)

## Analysts' Take:

**Shan Weiguo, senior researcher, China National Oil and Gas Corporation**

Every \$1 increase in the oil price equates to an extra \$12 billion that US consumers have to pay.

The US Strategic Petroleum Reserve was first established in 1975 after the first "Oil Crisis". The amount of the reserve has fluctuated from the very beginning, and the Bush administration promised to spend \$6 billion to increase the reserve to 1 billion barrels from the current 599 million barrels.

But the process has been delayed by endless debate in the US Congress, the turmoil in Venezuela (one of America's most important oil sources, supplying 16 percent of total US oil imports), the extremely cold winter, and the increasing oil price in the world market brought by the upcoming war against Iraq.

In the US oil reserve's 30 years history, the previous President Bush was the first to turn the tap. He released 33.75 million barrels from the reserve on the first day of Desert Storm in 1991, and the oil price dropped by \$10 the same day. But he was criticized by the market for doing this too late.

Bill Clinton released the reserve twice in his eight years in office, but was accused of doing so at "non-critical moments" in order to boost his reputation.

Chen Huai, deputy director,

**Institute of Market Economics, Development Research Center, the State Council of China**

China stated in its tenth "Five Year Plan" that as early as 2001 steps should be taken to build up the country's strategic petroleum reserve.

China's oil safety strategy has six levels of meaning: to adjust our energy consumption structure by reducing the reliance on oil and natural gas, shifting to liquified coal, gas coal and nuclear power; design a balance between natural oil deposits and those for exploration; to build up strategic oil reserves; to help big energy consumers build up their own reserves; to incubate a transaction market for risk diversification, such as the energy future markets; to participate in the world's future market and build up a certain amount of future oil contract stocks and influence oil future prices.

China's annual oil imports will rise to 180 million tons by 2015, compared to 70 million tons last year. The country has established some oil production bases in foreign countries, such as the Sudan, Iran and Peru, and can produce about 5.5 million tons every year.



Presidential Adviser on Petroleum and Energy Rilwanu Lukman from Nigeria is surrounded by journalists at OPEC's 124th ministerial meeting in Vienna on Tuesday, March 11.

Xinhua Photo

## OPEC Stays With Current Oil Output

Vienna, Austria, March 12 (AP) - OPEC signaled it would pump more oil to make up for any disruption in supply caused by war in Iraq, but it decided to keep its official output steady for now.

The organization agreed to stick with its production target of 24.5 million barrels a day. Its members argued that the world has more than enough crude to meet demand, and they blamed the recent surge in oil prices on fears that fighting in the Middle East might cause a shortage.

US Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham welcomed OPEC's decision as "very positive" and said the group's pledge to cover any shortfalls was "clear, honest and accurate."

(Bruce Stanley)



A Ghent port worker challenges riot police in downtown Brussels

AP Photo

## Striking EU Dockers Clash with Police

Brussels, Belgium, March 13 (AP) - Hundreds of striking dock workers clashed with police outside European Union headquarters last Friday protesting over plans to open ports to greater competition.

And thousands of other dockers converged Monday this week on the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France.

Meanwhile, strikes ranging from two hours to two days were held in France, Finland, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Greece, Portugal, Cyprus and other European nations throughout the week.

Dockers' representatives hope the protests will persuade lawmakers to introduce amendments to the bill under discussion, which they claim will lead to cheap, untrained laborers replacing registered harbor workers.

(Paul Ames)



US Capitol food worker Michael Parker holds up a sign advertising 'Freedom Fries' instead of the usual French fries being served in a House of Representatives cafeteria March 12, 2003.

Reuters Photo

## French Fries Re-named by Angry Congress

Washington, March 11 (AP) - The US Congress this week changed the "French fries" to "freedom fries" on their cafeteria menu. And for breakfast, they'll now have "freedom toast" instead of "French toast."

Congress is following a trend among restaurants around the US angry at French opposition to war against Iraq.

Officials at the French Embassy in Washington pointed out that "French fries" actually come from Belgium.

(Jim Abrams)



Vivendi Universal Chief Executive Jean-Rene

Reuters Photo

## Vivendi Posts Record French Loss

Paris, March 7 (Reuters) - Debt-laden Vivendi Universal racked up a 2002 net loss of 23.3 billion euros (\$25.6 billion), the biggest corporate loss in French history. The company confirmed it was in talks to ditch US showbusiness assets from Hollywood to cable TV.

But Vivendi vows to return to profit in 2003 and said it was sticking to its goal of raising seven billion euros from asset sales this year.

(Tim Hepher and William Emmanuel)



A foreign tourist visits the Indonesian Export Fair held in Jakarta March 9. Indonesian exports are growing fast. They reached \$4.92 billion for the month of January this year, up 20.4 percent from January last year, according to the country's Central Statistic Bureau.

Xinhua Photo

## Welcome to Indonesia!

## ECB Cuts Key Lending Rate to 2.5%



European Central Bank (ECB) President Wim Duisenberg

Reuters Photo

Frankfurt, March 6 (Dow Jones Newswires) - The European Central Bank cut its key lending rates by one quarter of a percentage point as a potential war in Iraq threatens to weigh on an already faltering economy.

The ECB's most important rate, the minimum bid rate, now stands at 2.5%, a historic low for Europe. The ECB last cut rates on December 5, trimming a half percentage point off all rates.

The euro, which was trading at \$1.0945 just ahead of the ECB's announcement, was quoted at \$1.0935 minutes after the cut was announced.

(Charlene Lee)

## Fed May Slash Rates to New Low

Washington, March 11 (AP) - The Federal Reserve may soon be forced to cut interest rates again during the board meeting on March 18, driving them to the lowest since Dwight Eisenhower was president, amid fears that the shaky economy is about to fall back into recession.

The Fed last cut interest rates on November 6, when it slashed its target for the

federal funds rate, the interest that banks charge each other on overnight loans, to 1.25 percent, the lowest average since 1.17 percent in July 1961.

(Martin Crutsinger)

## Media Reports:

### Sluggish Economies Set to Get Worse

Both Europe and the US are facing slowing economies, and they appear to be making the problem worse.

In Europe, the impending war against Iraq is worsening the economic prospects. Consumers' confidence continues to slide, with unemployment rising.

The euro zone last year didn't even muster 1% growth and for 2003 GDP projections generally lie just above 1%.

The euro's appreciation to a four-year high of \$1.1 this week damaged European exports.

Governments here have their hands tied. Rising budget deficits that threaten to breach European Union limits mean few can stimulate economies through fiscal measures. The ECB's rate cut is seen as the only option.

In the US, things are little bit easier. What the Fed is worrying about is a sudden halt in the slow economic recovery, which may be brought on by a war against Iraq.

Alice Rivlin, former vice president of the Federal Reserve said the Fed has used up all possible means of maintaining the economic recovery in the last two years. If the US economy continues sliding, the Fed should keep aside from any economic stimulus initiative.

Rivlin said further interest rate cuts would be useless as a zero percent interest rate is no different to the current 1.25 percent rate.

— International Finance News, March 9

## Warren Buffett Blasts Derivates

New York, March 11 (Financial Times) - Warren Buffett, the influential investor, blasted financial derivatives in his annual letter to shareholders of Berkshire Hathaway, the insurance and investment company he chairs.

Mr. Buffett warns in Berkshire's 2002 annual report about the dangers posed by derivatives - their accounting, the threat they pose both to corporations and economies in general, and why Berkshire Hathaway is in the process of getting out of derivatives business - which he called "financial weapons of mass destruction."

He says he has made few investments in stocks in the past year, and he still hasn't found many compelling values.

(Bill Mann of Motley Fool and Andrew Hill of Reuters)

## Analysts' Take:

**Tuo Guozhu, professor, Capital University of Economics and Business**

Since the 1960s, financial derivatives have developed rapidly and are still booming.

Stocks, bonds and currencies are all the targets of financial derivatives transactions, as are

from commodity futures and options.

These derivatives transactions help the market to find the real prices of commodities and help purchasers to avoid possible risks and losses.

Because of the high potential profits and the sophistication of the banking and financial industries, these transactions attract large amounts of capital.

Speculation in derivatives, combined with active trans-border and trans-industry capital flow, make the market over-volatile and dangerous.

One can resist the temptation of dabbling in derivatives, but none can stop the growth of the market, particularly when we are experiencing a rapidly transforming telecommunications industry, represented by the Internet and mobile phones, which enable people to conduct business more easily and widely.

We need a closer system of supervision.

Technically, the transaction tools of the Internet and mobile phones still need improvement if we want more reliable transactions.

Last, and most importantly, the morality of self-discipline is becoming more and more precious.

## Who is Responsible for Girl's Death?

By Chen Ying / Sun Jixu

Since the beginning of this year Qiao Honghai, 33, a resident in Shayu Village of Bohai Town of Huairou District, has been trying to wring an apology and compensation from his local village committee, believing they should be responsible for his daughter's death.

The girl died on November 15 last year in an accident on the public exercise equipment installed close to the Shayu Village Committee's office.

At noon that day, eight-year-old Qiao Ya was playing in the area with some of her classmates. The girl climbed onto one intended for hand, back and waist exercise that stood a good deal taller than her.

Her coat got hooked on the equipment as she was getting down, leaving her helplessly hanging in the air as her coat tightened around her neck. Her friends ran for help, but by the time her mother Yang Zihong arrived at the scene, Qiao was unconscious and could not breathe. She was rushed to the local hospital, where she died later that day.

Yang suffered a mental breakdown after the tragedy and underwent three days of treatment in the Huairou Branch of Beijing Anding Hospital, a local mental hospital.

Qiao Honghai thought the village committee should be responsible for his daughter's death since the exercise facility is public property. After the two sides failed to reach an agreement on the situation, he filed suit against the village committee in the Huairou District People's Court at the beginning of the year, demanding 220,000 yuan in compensation for his family.

The committee has refuted Qiao's claims, saying the exercise facilities were set up using funds donated by the Sports Lottery. According to the Beijing Civil Health Project Management Temporary Ordinance, the recipient of the donation of the equipment was the Bohai Town Government. The town government not only owns the facilities, but also has the duty to maintain, repair and manage them.

However, a vice mayor of the town who requested anonymity said the Shayu Village Committee asked the town government to install the facilities. He added members of the village committee once made an oral agreement with the town government to take responsibility for maintaining and managing the equipment.

The Huairou Court is currently overseeing a full investigation of the case.

Over 2,600 exercise gardens have been set up around the city since the Beijing Municipal Government launched a civil health project in 1998. This is the first time a person has died on the equipment, though there have been some cases of serious injuries.



The equipment on which Qiao Ya choked to death

Photo by Sun Jixu



Zhou Jun (left) inspects his pilfered bag.

Photo by Wang Zhenlong

## Luggage on Flight from Germany Found Damaged

By Ivy Zhang

More than ten Lufthansa German Airlines passengers received a nasty surprise at the baggage claim area in Beijing Airport on Monday morning when they found their luggage damaged and valuables within missing.

Since the incident, Lufthansa has been working closely with authorities and all related parties including the company's Frankfurt, Germany-based Corporate Security department and the German Airport Authority in conducting a full investigation of the case.

Beginning March 11, Lufthansa and Frankfurt Airport have heightened security measures regarding the handling of baggage

on China routes.

The disappointed passengers started on flight LH035 from Nuremburg to Frankfurt and then took flight LH720 to Beijing. The damaged bags had been pried open, had their zippers cut, or were crushed. Cash, jewelry and other valuables inside the luggage were lost, according to a *Beijing Youth Daily* report run on Tuesday.

Lufthansa representatives say the thefts were perpetrated in the Frankfurt airport.

"Lufthansa regrets this inconvenience to our passengers. We have talked with the passengers concerned about how to appropriately settle the issue in accordance with international rules," said Yu Dongyun, a

company PR agent.

She added, "For passengers that report cash losses, it is very hard for airlines to verify the amounts involved. However, we try out best to minimize their losses."

According to Yu, airlines generally compensate passengers in keeping with the conditions of the Warsaw Convention, which allows repayment of up to \$20 dollars per kilogram of damaged luggage.

It is clearly indicated in both Chinese and English on Lufthansa tickets that check-in luggage should not include personal, fragile and highly sensitive articles including jewelry and other valuables, as the "carrier is not liable for these items."

## Deaf, Dumb and in Detention

By Su Wei / Hu Rong

A group of deaf mute criminals from Changchun, Jilin Province, are behind a rash of robberies committed since late February, with over 60 car drivers robbed in just 20 days.

The gang was uncovered and arrested by police from the Haidian Branch of the Public Security Bureau this Monday.

Last Thursday afternoon, when Liu Kai (pseudonym) stopped his car for a red light at the Beiwalu intersection in Haidian district, a man jumped out of nowhere and started slapping his side window and waving his hands, as if trying to tell Liu something.

"I thought there must have been something wrong with my car, but when I got out to check the tires and other things, it was all OK," he said. "When I got back in, I saw the bag in the passenger seat was gone and the

man had disappeared."

The following afternoon, again at Beiwalu, police officers from the Enjizhuang Police Station saw three men using sign language approach a car stuck in a traffic jam. When one of them started to strike the car's windshield, the police charged him and tackled him to the ground. The two accomplices were also quickly rounded up.

Li Wenxue, one of three thieves, confessed to the police through a sign language interpreter that he was part of a 12-member gang controlled by a couple, Mr. Qu (the Haidian police refuse to disclose his full name) and his wife, Liu Haili. "We used to do these kinds of robberies in Tianjin, but most of us were caught by the police there at one time or another," he said.

Concerned that the Tianjin po-

lice were onto their scheme, the couple talked the other 10 deaf mutes into heading to Beijing to "try their luck."

When the group first arrived in Beijing, they bought a map to find places where traffic congestion was likely and escape routes plentiful.

"Each time the five of us went out to case areas to rob, we marked them clearly on the map and memorized the ways to get away," Li said. "When we actually did the robberies, normally one person hit the cars' windows, while another would steal the bags inside."

The two other members of Li's team were caught by the police that evening at their rented house. The rest of the gang was arrested this Monday morning, with the exception of leader Qu, who had headed home several days before and remains missing.

## Finnish Ski Legend to Enter Chinese Ski Race

By James Liu

Finnish cross-country skiing champion Juha Mieto is preparing to enter the Chinese Vasaloppet, a 90-kilometer ski race that will be the first event of its kind in China.

The 1976 Olympic gold medallist is part of a Finnish delegation that will attend the event in Changchun, Jilin Province, on March 15.

Anders Vestergard, leader of the delegation, told *Beijing Today* that they have organized ski races in Tsinghua University and found the sport of cross-country skiing has spread rapidly in China. "The Ministry of Education plans to make it an official sport in kindergarten to university curricula involving around 240 million students," he said.

The original Vasaloppet is held in Sweden the first Sunday in March every year and is the oldest, longest and largest cross-country skiing race in the world.

Mieto, despite his age of 53, is looking forward to the race. "Age is not a problem," he said. "Even people 80-years-old can join the event."

The race has drawn over 100 foreign entrants from Finland, Sweden, Norway and the US.



## Fish Give Royal Welcome

Thai Princess Siritwanwaree Mahidol, 16, dropped in on the Blue Zoo in Beijing on Thursday morning during her first visit to the capital.

Photo by Wang Zhenlong

## Local Doctor Earns Overseas Fame

By Sun Ming

After bringing a TV star back from the brink of death, a local doctor has developed a reputation around China that has launched her into a jet set life.

Ling Feng, director of the Neurosurgery Department of Beijing Xuanwu Hospital, has received a steady stream of requests for treatment by people in Hong Kong and Taiwan since she saved the life of former Hong Kong Phoenix TV anchorwoman Liu Hairuo last year.

The doctor became a household name in June 2002, after 33-year-old Liu was badly injured when a train bound from London to Cambridge derailed on May 10. The accident left the Hong Kong TV personality in a coma, after which British doctors began preparations to declare her brain dead. They wanted to conduct tests to confirm that diagnosis, but the woman's parents refused to give permission.

At the request of Liu's parents, Dr. Ling flew to London, and after concluding Liu was probably not brain dead, brought her back to Beijing on June 18.

After one month of intensive treatment by Ling using a combination of Western and traditional Chinese methods, Liu opened her eyes. Another month later, she began to speak.

"What I did proves that China's hospitals are not inferior to foreign hospitals," said Dr. Ling.

"At the same time," she added, "if someone is brain dead, nothing can be done. Liu was not brain dead, so I could treat her. I don't have supernatural powers, as some people seem to think."

On March 2, Ling returned to Beijing from a trip to Hong Kong to examine a nine-year-old girl, heeding a desperate plea from the girl's father. The child was hit by an iron rod that fell from a high building a month ago, and was diagnosed as brain dead by doctors in Hong Kong.

The father said that he would not give up all hope until he had heard from Dr. Ling. Unfortunately, she found there was nothing she could do for the girl in this case and agreed with the earlier diagnosis.

"Many people have faxed me the medical records of their ailing relatives from Hong Kong, some of whom have been in a come for more than 12 years," said Ling. "I'm a doctor, not an all-powerful being, and there are some cases when I can't do anything."

Ling generally tries to discourage people from other parts of the country from coming to Beijing to seek her treatment. "Especially in cases where neurosurgery is necessary, transporting patients from place to place is rather dangerous and great caution must be used," she said.

## Close Encounters of the Sketchy Kind

By Lily Li

Local retiree Gao Weihong believes he has seen an unusual group of visitors to the capital — extra-terrestrials.

Scientists and experts gathered at the Beijing UFO Research Center last Saturday to watch video footage.

74-year-old Gao Weihong shot to support his sightings last month.

Gao saw two glowing, round objects in the western sky while walking his dog in the Yun Quyan residential area in Huilongguan, Changping District, at 6 pm on February 10. The two shining objects flew one above the other, both followed by smoke trails, until they suddenly disappeared.

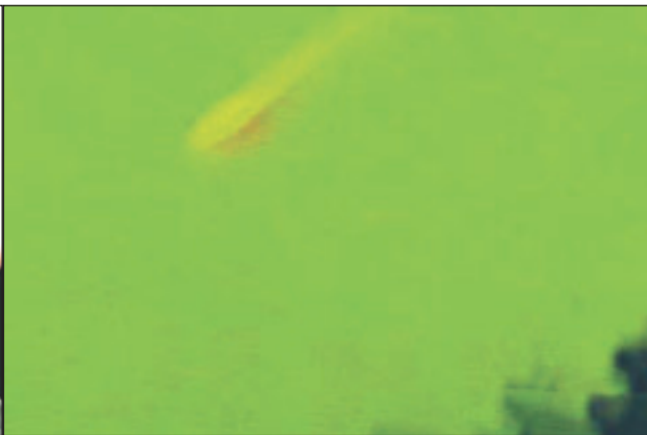
Several minutes later, they reappeared, moving slower. Gao started to wonder if he was seeing flying saucers.

Then an orange, elliptical shining object appeared, also followed by a long, smoky trail, moving far slower than the first two bodies. Gao rushed home, grabbed his digital video recorder and headed back outside, filming the objects until they disappeared behind nearby buildings.



Gao Weihong

Photo by Zhang Wei



A clip from Gao's video footage

"I was so excited that my hands were shaking, but I got almost 50 seconds of footage," Gao said. He admitted to not being a professional camera or UFO tracker, but said he has great interest in unexplained phenomena.

He sent the tapes to the UFO research center, where several experts said the objects might have been hot air balloons.

On February 26 and 27, Gao got more footage of a shiny rotating object with orange lights hanging at an an-

gle in the sky.

After carefully checking the tapes, the experts at the Saturday meeting concluded that the objects Gao shot were not airplanes, balloons or searchlights. Zhou Xiangqiang, secretary general of the UFO Research Center, announced that they were UFOs, meaning unidentified flying objects, but whether or not they were flying saucers could not be determined.

However, Si Manan, a famed private scholar of unexplained phenomena,

has questioned the center's conclusion. "They said they were UFOs because they could not have been planes or balloons. But what about meteors or other space debris burning up in the atmosphere?" he said.

In the view of Dr. Zhu Jin, curator of the Beijing Planetarium, the objects in the video were airplanes, and these kinds of misguided sightings are not uncommon. He added, "If you are patient and have clear skies, you can observe such objects many times a day."

By Lily Li

Angry at his neighbor saying “your son is not a bit like you”, Zhang Ming, a factory worker in Nanjing, decided to strike a bet with the neighbor: “5,000 yuan says the boy is mine!”

Early the next day, Zhang brought his son to Shanghai for a DNA test. The results were shocking: it turned out that the boy he had called “son” for three years wasn’t his. As well as feeling he had lost his son, Zhang lost 5000 yuan.

Outraged, and armed with his DNA evidence, Zhang Ming went to court to demand a divorce from his wife Li Li. She begged for a pardon and told the truth. The child was the result of a previous relationship. But Zhang Ming couldn’t forgive her. “I can’t stand that I have raised someone else’s son for three years,” he said. On February 22, Zhang Ming got his wish and his four-year-long marriage was over.

Zhang Ming is one of 98 fathers who brought their sons and daughters to Shanghai Blood Research Center to get DNA-based paternity tests in 2002. According to the statistics of the center which started this service a year ago, the number of family requested DNA tests has far exceeded what are judicially required.

“We never advertised this service, but we’ve had an endless stream of people coming for the test,” said Yang Ying, one of the directors of the center, told *Shanghai Morning Post*.

Shanghai is not the only place to experience a DNA frenzy. There were more than 150 tests in Heilongjiang Province last year, having had only four or five tests every year before 2002.

The tests, which are based on the same DNA technology that police use to catch criminals, are faster, cheaper and more accurate than blood tests. “DNA tests have completely replaced blood tests which were expensive, slow and limited,” said Lu Di, a researcher at the Beijing Institute of Forensic Medicine and Science (BIFMS), one of the four government approved DNA testing institutions in Beijing.

Although it’s troublesome for the test candidates to get valid certificates for a DNA test, the test is still booming at BIFMS. Lu Di said during the past 10 years, DNA-based paternity testing has more than tripled.

“It’s amazing the way the awareness of the power of DNA testing

# Who’s Your Daddy?

## Paternity technology tests family relationships

has grown,” said Liu Jingzhong, director of Beijing Human Identification & Paternity Test Center. “People who never would have considered doing something like this 10 years ago are flooding in.”

“The key was how quickly the legal system and the public in general understood it and began to make use of it,” he added.

The tests, which cost around 3600 yuan, can be completed within a week and can use samples collected by mouth swabs as well as blood samples. “It can help determine the paternity and prevent disputes in adoption and inheritance,” said the director.

However, not everyone is happy about the popularity of these tests. Some feel it’s disturbing the time-honored concept of parenthood, as well as creating an atmosphere of mistrust in couples.

The test centers have to offer comfort and counseling to candidates who are emotionally devastated by the test results. Lu Di said she always has to prepare test candidates by warning them

of the possibility that the results could be disturbing, particularly because the science of DNA is considered so accurate. “I want to make sure they want to go through with it,” she said.

### Why is DNA testing so popular?

**Neal Hurowitz, American lawyer specializing in marital law**

If men don’t want to be fooled, nowadays they can get DNA tested, know where they stand and make arrangements for the child, all without the adversarial situation of being pulled into court.

However, fear, instead of joy, results from DNA testing becoming so popular. A test result, or even just the thought of taking the test, can ruin a family’s happiness.

The technology itself is only a tool and we should use it when it’s useful. But take care to see if it’s appropriate.

**Xu Anqi, professor at the Sociology Institute, the Chinese Academy of Social Science**

The thought “husband is lord”

has been a central plank of Chinese society for thousands of years. A Chinese husband usually thinks his wife should serve him alone. The fear of unfaithful activities is one of the key reasons so many husbands ask for the tests.

But in my opinion, we shouldn’t allow this test to be commonly available. Chinese husbands are quick to become suspicious, and the convenience of taking a test is helping to destroy many families. **He Yonghai, writer for *Guangming Daily***

DNA testing has helped resolve inheritance disputes and clear up family mix-ups. It has appeared at the same time as modern problems such as volatile marriages, increasing infidelity and pregnancy before marriage. From this point of view, DNA testing is necessary.

But we’d better look at the effects of DNA testing in the right way. We’ve seen many family tragedies due to misplaced suspicions between husbands and wives. In order to avoid these tragedies, I advise all suspicious men to take a DNA test, and all suspicious women to hire a private detective to find out whether their husbands are having affairs.

**Luo Hanguo, Internet surfer**

Since a DNA test doesn’t cost much, it’s a good way for a husband or wife to make sure of their partner’s honesty. On the other hand, it shows a lot of men are not confident in themselves.

### Is it destroying the family unit?

**Neal Hurowitz**

Divorces have become more contentious and family ties strained as parents seek to avoid child support payments through DNA tests.

**Xu Anqi**

The test is not an ultimate method to solve the conflicts between husbands and wives. For men, bringing the children to the testing lab is a very good way for them to resolve their suspicions. But it also risks ruining a family.

Even if the test results in a sigh of relief for the husband, the wife will remember the insult for the rest of her life. Also, the test can be deeply disturbing for the children.

**He Yonghai**

It will work to some extent as a mechanism to solve family crises. If trust is shaky, making things clear is a good way for both sides to resolve their doubts.

Society should take a sane look at the parents and children who take the tests. DNA-based pater-

nity testing is not an evil; only those who deride it are evil.

**Luo Hanguo**

When it comes to a DNA test, the result is not important because the basic principles of being an honest person have been denied. It’s not the result on paper but the distrust that hurts people’s marriages and feelings.

Not having a test can decide whether a person is faithful or not. And even if the child is not yours, it doesn’t mean your wife isn’t.

### What makes a father? Is it genetic heritage or is it the relationship?

**Neal Hurowitz**

Are we saying that if you cared for a child for 15 years, a test is then going to make you walk away? It does force you to think what it means to be a parent.

Underlying the debate is the fundamental question of what constitutes fatherhood. Is it the man whose genes a child shares, or the one who rocks the child to sleep at night?

**Xu Anqi**

I’m wondering if it’s a test of loyalty or of love. A responsible parent won’t force such a cruel test on a child. Anyway, children are innocent and they shouldn’t bear the mistakes of the mother or father.

There is an old saying in China that once you are the teacher of a child, forever you’ll be his or her father. Then where will you go if you have been the child’s father for several or dozens of years?

**He Yonghai**

Making the situation clear is very important for a father. Whether he accepts the child is his own business.

The father has the right to know whether the child is his own and to raise his own child. The child also has the right to know who is his or her real father.

The test may cast some shadows on family life, but I think these are temporary. An honest and true love can survive any test.

**Luo Hanguo**

The problem of whether genetic heritage or a relationship makes a father is not important when the child takes the test, because the relationship of a family can never go back to the way it was.

Even if the family members can heal themselves, their relatives, neighbors and workmates won’t stop talking about it. I do believe wherever there is distrust there is disharmony.

## SOUND BITES

**The first sessions of 10th NPC & CPPCC are being held in Beijing. The following are some quotes from NPC deputies and CPPCC members.**

*“No other country has a capital as gaudy as ours.”*

— Wang Dong, from Beijing Municipal Institute of City Planning and Design. In his mind, Beijing’s buildings are too brightly colored, reflecting the weakness of the city’s management and the superficiality of the city’s culture. New resident buildings on more than 1.8 million square meters of land will soon be constructed in Beijing.

*“It’s unfair that female civil servants who have high academic background and titles have to retire at 55, while men retire at 60. It also discourages the training and progress of female leaders. Furthermore, it encourages male chauvinism.”*

— Yao Zhenwei, from Chongqing University of Medical Science, who believes both male and female civil servants should retire at the same age of 60.

*“I insist I’ll never stop talking while problems remain with China’s telecommunications.”*

— Fang Tingyu, former director of the Foreign Languages Department of Beijing University of Chinese Medicine, issuing his third project at the congress meeting about the problems of China’s telecommunications. He says there should only be a one-way charge for mobile phones.

*“China’s football is like a bottomless pit. It is never full no matter how much money is poured in. The problem is the players lack spirit. You can forgive them if their technique is not so good. But if they can’t even run? They always talk about money. But money can’t buy a world championship.”*

— Ma Junren, from Liaoning Administration of Sports.

By Chen Ying

# Should Prostitutes Who Use Condoms Get Softer Punishment?

By Sun Ming

Chen Lingfu, a member of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, submitted a proposal to the conference on Sunday last week. He suggested that prostitutes and their clients should be punished less severely if they use a condom.

Chen, also the deputy chairman of the Political Consultative Conference of Jiangsu Province, explained that it was virtually impossible to eliminate prostitution in China, and that the principal danger it poses is the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. He said the proposal was intended to limit this risk.

Prostitution has been illegal in China since 1949, but the world’s oldest business shows no signs of fading away.

Wu Zunyou, a researcher from the Chinese Academy of Preventive Medical Science, said that in some areas, the incidence of venereal disease and AIDS among prostitutes is as high as 10 percent.

The Ministry of Health said that venereal disease has become one of the three major infectious diseases in China. In recent years, the number of people suffering from venereal disease has increased by 15 percent a year and the disease has become a serious social and public health problem.

But sex workers and clients often don’t use condoms. Chen says one of the major reasons for this is that police usually view condoms as the main evidence when they combat prostitution.

Chen’s proposal has aroused different opinions:

**Chen Xingliang, professor of law at Beijing University**

The suggestion is very meaningful. Prostitution is not just an ethical problem. Even though China’s government has taken measures to curb prostitution, it has not succeeded. The spread of venereal disease and AIDS means prostitution is an increasing threat to society, so I support the suggestion.

**Zhao Pengfei, an official of the World Health Organization, China Branch**

It’s a good thing to advocate using condoms, which can protect people’s health. I support the use of condoms among sex workers, but this doesn’t mean that I support prostitution. Condoms have nothing to do with the punishment sex workers and their clients should face. It’s the government’s business to decide how severely to punish them.

We should view the prevention of VD as the most important issue. We started the “100

percent condom project” at some entertainment venues in China from 2001. Up to now, the project has been quite successful.

**Dr. Wu Zunyou, a researcher from the Chinese Academy of Preventive Medical Science**

This proposal reflects people’s concerns about the spread of VD and AIDS. They know the danger of these diseases. At the same time, they realize that it’s hard to eliminate prostitution in China in the short term. Compared with the bad social influence of the sex industry, the harm of the spread of VD and AIDS seems more urgent. So the proposal is a reasonable and practical idea.

**Wang Jian, a Beijing policeman**

It’s ridiculous! Prostitution is a disgusting social phenomenon. Prostitutes and their clients should be punished severely, whether they use a condom or not. By the way, using condoms as evidence is not as important as Chen said. It’s tempting to believe he doesn’t have a problem with prostitution.

**Zhang Zhiyong, the head of a police station in Shenyang, Liaoning Province**

As far as I know, most prostitutes and clients would prefer to use condoms. They are all afraid

of venereal disease.

Under most circumstances, we can only catch them when they’re “on the job”. And Chen is right that we view condoms we found at the scene as the main evidence.

Nevertheless, I don’t agree with Chen’s proposal. They should be punished anyway, without any excuse. Prostitution is a disgusting problem, which threatens the stability of many families.

In the past, prostitutes and clients were only detained for about 15 days and were fined hundreds of yuan, but now they lose their freedom for a much longer time. They will be sent to some labor education and rehabilitation facilities and have to stay there for between half a year and one year.

Now, prostitution is less rampant in Shenyang than before. But if we punish people less severely, the problem will grow worse again.

**Gary Rice, journalism professor from Nankai University**

The penalties for prostitution should be relaxed or eliminated altogether. Of all the problems the world faces today, prostitution is one of the least important. Prostitution will go on whether it is legal or not. Might as well

make it legal. And everything possible should be done to eliminate venereal diseases. Legalized regulation of prostitution that would perhaps include mandatory testing of sex workers would help cut back on the spread of serious disease. In the state of Nevada, where prostitution is legal and regulated, the AIDS rate is quite low. And eliminating legal penalties for prostitution also would cut down on corruption and pay-offs of officials who look the other way.

**Cherise Fong, unemployed**

Personally, I think sex workers should only be penalized for engaging in commercial sex if they don’t use a condom. It’s in the interest of public welfare that they use condoms while they’re doing business.

**Wu Qiang, manager of Beijing Feifan Club**

I think the best way to prevent the spread of VD and AIDS is to establish red-light districts in China, as some western countries do. You know, we can’t eliminate prostitution. The government can organize for the sex workers there to take regular tests, once every two weeks or once a month. Also, the government can get high tax revenue from red-light districts every year.

What Chen Lingfu says:

*My proposal doesn’t mean I support prostitution. I completely object to prostitution. I just want to control the damage it causes.*

*Many people agree with my view. We’ve been to some bars, cafeterias and ballrooms in our Jiangsu Province to investigate.*

*We were shocked by the problems of prostitution and drugs there. So I brought the proposal to Beijing this time. Now the number of people who suffer from HIV has already passed one million. We have to take some effective measures.*

*Police usually view condoms as the main evidence when they catch sex workers and their clients. If they find condoms at the scene, they believe that it was prostitution, otherwise, it wasn’t. So many prostitutes and their clients take a risk and don’t use a condom, thus increasing the spread of VD and AIDS.*

By Su Wei

Initially it was difficult getting Tong Hua to talk about her case. "My life has only just returned to normal. I don't want to dig up all that stuff again." In 2001, Tong Hua, 32, became the first person to lodge a sexual harassment case in China. She claimed the general manager of the state-owned enterprise she was working at in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province had been harassing her for seven years. She lost the case. The reason, the court said, was that "she failed to provide sufficiently reliable material evidence or witnesses."

"What I wanted was for him to apologize to me. But that man was just transferred somewhere else after the case, but still as a leader."

It may be a relatively new issue in China, but recent surveys have found that sexual harassment is disturbingly common, the norm even. In 2001, the Sociology Institute of China's Academy of Social Sciences conducted a survey among a random selection of 169 women from Beijing, Shanghai, Changsha and Xi'an with a range of occupations, from workers to government employees. Among them, 142 said they had been sexually harassed in the past one and a half years, and 107 said it had happened at least twice.

Last year, *Beijing Youth Daily* conducted a survey among 100 female and 100 male Beijingers. Seventy percent of the women said they had been sexually harassed, and 30 percent said it happened frequently.

#### What could I do?

Li Ming, a 38-year-old single mother, feels she is a coward. "I couldn't bring myself to protest or to say 'No' to my boss. I didn't dare," she says. During the interview, she kept on crying and looked as though she felt ashamed.

She used to work in a private real estate company as an accountant. "It suddenly happened," Li said. "One day after I had been working overtime, my boss insisted on driving me home. As I was about to get out of the car, he hugged me and kissed me. I struggled to push him away. My husband happened to come out at that moment and saw everything." The worst thing for Li was that instead of supporting her, her husband did not want to listen to any explanations and accused her of having an affair with her boss. "I begged my boss to explain to my husband. He refused. He started calling me, sometimes late at night."

"I resigned and got divorced," she said. "Life after the divorce was even harder."

Li says she wants to resign from her new job too. "But I know



that I cannot. I need money to raise my daughter. I do not want to be humiliated again. I do not want my daughter to be affected."

Yao Yu, 28, currently a marketing director in a Beijing trading company, says her first experience of being sexually harassed came just after she had graduated from university. "My boss, an American Chinese, tried to take advantage of me at a dinner for one of his clients. The client thought that I was a prostitute not a secretary because of the way my boss behaved," recalled Yao. "I protested and said, 'I want to resign.' He said, 'I will approve your resignation tomorrow. But today you are still my employee. You have not finished your work today. I still have the power to punish you.'" She left with almost 5,000 yuan salary unpaid. It took her six months to find another job."

These days, she says she is not so worried about harassment, "as long as there is something to be gained from it." Women shouldn't behave like prostitutes to achieve their goals, she says, "but can the men who touch your back and shoulders, or say something obscene really get anything from you? I just know how to benefit from my advantages and get what I want."

#### Guys are affected too

Hu Wei, a university graduate, resigned from his position as vice director from a joint venture in Beijing last month. "I know it is thanks to my boss's favor that I got this position. But I don't want to be regarded as a gigolo."

He says his female boss, who is in her late 30s, once invited him to have dinner. "She kept on complaining how hard it was for her to keep a balance as a manager and a woman." Hu felt he had to comfort her. "The more I comforted her, the closer she seemed to get to me. She talked to me in an obscene tone and touched my body with some sensitive parts of her body."

Hu was so embarrassed he wanted to scream. "But I was afraid everyone would think I was harassing her. At any rate, I was worried she would say this if I rejected her and if she decided to take revenge."

In the survey conducted by *Beijing Youth Daily*, nearly 49 percent believed that men were harassed by women, but none of the men surveyed said they had been harassed.

Another survey conducted by the Sociology Department of the Legal College of Shenzhen University in 2000 found 18 percent of the 270 men surveyed said they had been harassed, compared with over 43 percent of the 330 surveyed women.

Zhang Gengsheng, a lawyer in Beijing Fengshifeng Lawyer's office, says his office has received no cases relating to men being harassed. "But we cannot say they are less likely to be harassed. They may have a narrower definition of sexual harassment, be more tolerant of it or maybe they don't even care." He says that women are more sensitive than men to some gestures, such as being

patted on the back or shoulders.

"Also men's dignity prevents them from telling others about being harassed, as they are afraid of being looked down on or being laughed at. They think if they admit to being harassed by women, it shows they are weak or incompetent."

#### The problem of evidence

Wang Hua, 29, an employee at Xiaohe branch of Naming District Electricity Bureau, Guiyang, Guizhou Province, sued the former bureau director, Yu Yanfu, 58, for sexual harassment in June 2002, asking for compensation of over 140,000 yuan.

Her parents believe that Yu's attentions are part of the reason why Wang subsequently suffered psychological problems, leading to a severe case of schizophrenia, diagnosed at the People's Hospital of Naming District in June 2001, one year after the evening in question.

"Yu asked my daughter to come to his office and sit beside him on the bed," said Wang's father. "When she refused, he first threatened to sack her and then tried to embrace her. Yu later confessed what he had done to Wang and presented a written apology to us."

Yu denies this version of events, saying he had been monitoring the examination classrooms at that time. "My office is right next to the classrooms. If Wang had shouted, how come no-one heard it and came forward as a witness?" Yu says he did talk to Wang but on another day. "I carelessly touched her knees

and patted her shoulders with my hands. Is there anything wrong with an elder leader showing that kind of affection towards ordinary staff?" Yu says the family forced him to write his apology. "They say Wang has serious schizophrenia and may die."

The court asked the family and Yu to negotiate with each other. When *Beijing Today* called the court, a spokesman explained the problem. "How to decide the proper distance a man should keep from a woman, especially a male leader and a female member of staff, is not easy to decide. There is no 'hard' definition to be relied on. It depends on the people involved and the situation."

When *Beijing Today* interviewed 25 schoolgirls from a middle school in Haidian District, ten said they had been harassed in buses or subways, especially in summer. But the Beijing Public Security Bureau says it's impossible for them to investigate sexual harassment in buses or subways due to "the evidence problem."

Zhao Jianji, of the Law Department of the Ministry of Justice, says the reason few people lodge such lawsuits or report them to the police is the difficulty of procuring evidence. "Sexual harassment is subjective. It's unusual for a third party to be involved and the unpredictability of such incidents result in the difficulty in getting sufficient evidence."

In his opinion, even if the victims are able to provide such evidence through photographs

or tape recordings to court, the court still may not accept such evidence, "even though the Supreme Court said last year that evidence collected privately may be reliable."

#### Is modern culture to blame?

Intimate touches in public places such as offices, buses and subways are regarded as the most common form of sexual harassment, followed by telling "yellow" stories or playing jokes, according to the survey conducted by China's Academy of Social Sciences in 2001.

But in the survey conducted one year later by *Beijing Youth Daily*, around 30 percent said that people are also harassed by short messages through mobile phones or photos through emails.

Almost all of the people interviewed by *Beijing Today* said it was common for them to receive such messages and emails. "It can be a little bit embarrassing," said Huang Ling, "but it seems that no one really cares about it. Fortunately I am used to it, so I don't blush." Huang wasn't sure it could even be considered a form of sexual harassment.

Tang Can, a researcher at the Sociology Institute of China's Academy of Social Sciences, feels it's a pity that people tolerate and accept such behavior, treating it as a kind of game or joke. "It undermines society's morals. But no one stands up to protest about this."

In her opinion, sexual harassment in the form of lewd messages or emails springs from the popularity of vulgar and shallow culture, simply catering for the lowest tastes. "But when such harassment avoids any moral control or legal discipline, how can we prevent it?"

#### Legislation needed

"Sexual harassment has barely emerged as a legal concept in China at the moment," says Zhao Jianji. "There is no specific law or regulation for sexual harassment." He says there is no indication of what kind of punishment is to be given or to what degree in cases of sexual harassment.

He says at the moment the government is already busy modifying its legal apparatus to deal with other issues and may not have enough time to think about legislation for sexual harassment. "Abducting and selling women, rape and domestic violence are not under effective legal control. How is it possible for the government to think about laws relating to sexual harassment? This is a case of legislation lagging behind social demand."

(Pseudonyms are used for the victims of sexual harassment.)

Photo / Tony Stone

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# How Young is Underage?

By Ivy Zhang

When a thirteen-year-old girl went looking for love on the Internet, she never imagined she'd be so successful.

With the chat room moniker Mad Woman and claiming to be 19 years old she racked up eight conquests in the space of two months.

But the law soon intervened and police apprehended six of the young men she had sexual relations with. Their future is now being hotly debated.

Normally the six men - aged between 17 and 21 and all claiming they didn't know Mad Woman's real age - would face three to ten years in prison, Shenyang-based *Times Business* reports.

According to the law, "an individual who has sex with a girl under the age of 14 shall be punished severely on the charge of rape, whether he knows the girl's real age or not, and regardless of whether the sex is consensual."

However, the court in Liaoning couldn't reach a unanimous conclusion on the case, so they referred it to China's Supreme Court.

In response, a new judicial clarification was released this January. It said, "if the individual really does not know the other party is under the age of 14, and if they had sexual relations on a consensual basis, then no crime

has been committed so long as no severe consequences occur and the severity of the case is light."

The six young men are still awaiting sentence, but in light of the new clarification it seems they might be sentenced less severely or even set free.

Some have suggested that the best way to remove doubt in future cases would be to reduce the age of consent from 14 to 10, the reasoning being that it would then be pretty hard for someone to claim he didn't know the girl was underage.

## Mad Woman's romance

Admittedly Mad Woman is physically precocious. She's 1.65 meters tall and has long hair and big eyes. She was born on May 2, 1989 and has lived with her grandmother since her parents divorced when she was four years old.

"She was expelled by a private high school one day after being transferred there, just before the last winter vacation (late January or early February). She said it was because of communication barriers between her and her teachers," Li Xinyue, a reporter for *Times Business* told *Beijing Today*.

On February 11, 2002, on the eve of China's Spring Festival, Mad Woman got to know a young man nicknamed Careless through an Internet café in Anshan city, Liaoning Province.

The two chatted on the web the whole night. Mad Woman called Careless the next night saying she did not want to go back home so the two met and made love that night, the first time for Mad Woman. She does not know the real name of the "Careless" man and police have yet to find him.

Mad Woman's Internet sex life continued in the same way. She had sexual relations with eight people she met on the Internet within 45 days.

The last one on the list was a college student whose name has not been disclosed.

After she stayed with him in a dorm room on campus for 10 days, the school found out and tipped off the police. The college student was then expelled by the school and left home. Nobody knows where he is now.

The other six were caught by the police and sent to court for the trial.

Mad Woman said she had lied about her age because "she was afraid the men would treat her like a kid" and she did it just because "she wanted to know what love making was like," *Times Business* reports.

## Headache for the court

Three of the six men were tried at Lishan District Court in Anshan city. The trial is pending and the court is waiting for instructions from the higher

courts, Zhang Liuming, the judge in charge of the case, told *Beijing Today*.

Zhang declined to give more details about the case as it is not closed. The cases of the other three men are being heard at other district courts.

This is the first case of this kind to be tried at the court in Liaoning.

When discussing the case, the trial committee at the Lishan District Court had two different viewpoints. One was that the defendants' behavior constituted the crime of rape. The other was that it should not be defined as rape because the victim lied about her age and her physical features made her look like an adult. Also, she consented to sex.

So the case was passed to higher courts and eventually the Supreme Court.

"It was hard to reach a verdict as the law is vague on this point," said Ling Zhijun, director of the Research Division of Liaoning High Court.

On January 17, the Supreme Court promulgated the new judicial explanation.

## Clarification or confusion?

A hot debate is currently going on in Internet chat rooms and *Times Business* has received many calls since their news story about Mad Woman was published this Tuesday.

Some legal experts, as well as

men who have had similar experiences to the defendants, have welcomed the new explanation.

But others have criticized it, suggesting it could encourage more crimes and that it creates new uncertainty.

Will people have to check a woman's Identification Card and be sure the ID card is not fake? Or maybe the age of consent should be lowered from 14 to 10 to avoid any possible doubt?

*Beijing Today* interviewed Chen Xingliang, criminal law professor at Peking University this Wednesday.

Chen says the new justice clarification will not encourage crime. In China, anyone who has sexual relations with an underage girl is guilty of the crime of rape. But the condition is that "he definitely knows the girl's age". If he does not or has no way to know the age, the person is not guilty of rape and shall be set free.

"In the past, such cases have already been handled that way. But as the law is not quite clear, some particular cases are controversial," Chen says. "The new justice explanation clarifies this point and sets a uniform standard in legal circles."

But Chen admits that the new clarification does make it more difficult for judicial organs to judge the crime. The term "definitely know" is the crux of the

matter. Some courts will interpret it as "having already known" or "should have known".

"Whether the defendant definitely knows the age or not is not subject to the defendant's confession. It shall be judged according to the actual situation of the individual case," Chen says. "It is more difficult to judge, but this is a prerequisite for calling it a crime."

He said the new explanation would not impose great influence on the judgment of raping underage girls because cases such as that of Mad Woman only account for about 1% of the total.

In most cases, the age of the victim is easy to identify and the victim has a clear relationship with the defendant who might be a primary school teacher or neighbor.

"There are only a few cases in which it's not obvious that a girl is underage," said Chen.

For the age limit, Chen said most countries set the age limit at 16 and a few countries set it at 10. China is in the middle.

"Generally speaking, the age limit of 14 accords with the actual situation of modern society and does not need to be modified," he says.

Chen added that should a man aged less than 16 years old have sexual relations with an underage girl, its not a crime so long as the case is not severe.

# Beneath Our Skin

By Chen Ying

A research group charged by the government with creating China's first "visible human" declared recently that it had finished all the data collection from a female specimen.

"But it still needs time and money to complete the virtual human model," Zhong Shizhen, the director of the Clinical Anatomy Institute of the First Military Medical University and also a member of the group, told *Beijing Today* Wednesday.

## What have we got?

To develop China's own visible human, the 174th Fragrant Hill Science Meeting focusing on

"Chinese digital visible human science and technology problems" was held in Beijing on November 5, 2001.

Developing a visible human was listed as part of the National High Technology Research and Development Program which was launched in March 1986 with the aim of enhancing China's international competitiveness and improving China's overall high technology R&D capability.

The Chinese Digital Virtual Human Group was made up of experts from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Capital University of Medical Sciences, Huazhong University of Science & Technology and the First Military Medical University.

The result, published on February 18, is based on the specimen of a female, 19, 1.56 meters in height, 46kg in weight, born in Guangxi, who died due to food poisoning in Guangdong last year.

The experts have milled the specimen into 8556 serial cross sections with intervals of 0.2 mm between each section.

China is the third country to produce a successive human body slice image following the US and South Korea.

The American male visible human is not a complete specimen because it was cut into four segments before the preparation of the cross sectional specimen, leading to deficiency in the data from the other three segments. Also, the right testicle of the cadaver had been removed before death.

Absorbing other's experience, Chinese experts adopted some of their own measures to improve their model. They input different colors into the body's arteries and veins beforehand, making it easier for the research group to tell different blood vessels from other biological structures and organs.

## Competing research groups

There are three other independent groups in China researching their own visible humans.

Professor Li Youqiong and his group at the Basic Medical College in Jilin University plan to complete their data set collection from the body of a man who was in his 40s and 1.8 meters in height next year. How to get



enough financial support may be the key problem for this project even though the group has been working on it since November 1998.

Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine got a data set from a male specimen in December 2000 and a female specimen in April 2002.

With grants from National Natural Science Foundation of China, the Chinese Visible Human Project Team of the Third Military Medical University in Chongqing completed its first Chinese Visible Human data set collection from a male specimen (35, 1.7 meters in height, 65kg in weight, born in Chongqing) in October 2002 after more than three years' hard work.

"To develop our research, the group has used up about 3.5 million yuan. And we still need much more," said Zhang Shaoxiang, the director of Chinese Visible Human Program at the Third Military Medical University.

To make the research more efficient, some experts suggest holding a meeting this June at Fragrant Hill to discuss research progress and organize further communication between the four groups.

## What are the benefits?

In future, people will be able to set up their own virtual image. After a 3D camera snaps their whole body, everyone will be able to see the make up of their own body clearly on a computer screen, from the skin to the organs, blood vessels, nerves, bones and muscles. People will be able to create their own body database, which will be invaluable in medical treatment.

But data set collection is only the first step in constructing a visible human. The more difficult work is to fulfill the 3D digital construction. The second step needs not only medical knowledge but also high-level computer technology.

So having our own virtual doubles is some way off yet.

"There are three progressively detailed steps in making a visible human: virtual visible human, which is just the image of the body; a virtual physical human which will show some of the internal structure, such as bones; and virtual biological human which will offer detailed views of internal organisms," said Professor Li Youqiong.

But China is just at the first step in his mind. It may take several generations yet to fulfill the program.

# New Life in Old Art

By Hu Xiaoli

“What do you do?” the stranger asks casually. “I am an artist,” Lu Xue answers. “Really? What kind of art?” The stranger shows obvious interest and respect. “I am a folk artist,” Lu says. “Er, what kind of folk art?” The stranger looks a little less interested. “I am a paper-cut artist,” she says. “Ah...” The respect and curiosity vanish from the stranger's eyes in a second.

According to Lu Xue, this sort of conversation often takes place during her trips around China promoting her craft. “Paper cutting is regarded as just a simple handicraft without much artistic merit or requiring any talent. It's not seen as comparable with painting or other kinds of art in most Chinese eyes.” This hasn't stopped Lu from trying to open peoples minds. At the moment she's busy organizing some paper-cutting activities in Beijing.

“I wish more people would appreciate the artistry of paper cutting,” Lu has a gentle smile, but a firm expression. Her determination has helped her fulfill a wish she's had since childhood to make a life as a paper-cut artist. She has held a number of paper cutting exhibitions in China and overseas. Her works have even been collected by several museums and organizations around the world, including the Great Hall of the People in China and the Hans Christian Andersen Museum in Denmark.

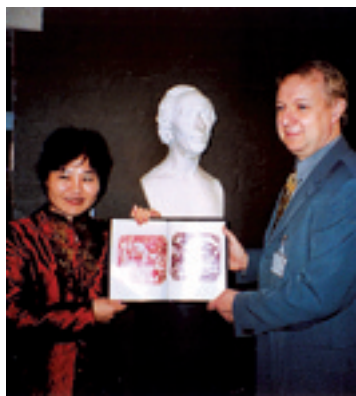
## Andersen, Fairy Tales and Chinese Paper Cutting

During a visit to Denmark in 2002, Lu Xue donated 112 of her paper cuts based on Andersen's fairy tales to the Hans Christian Andersen Museum in Odense. “I think Mr. Andersen would be happy to see his beloved fairy tales depicted by Chinese traditional paper cutting,” says Lu, excitedly.

Since starting learning the time-honored craft at the age of six, Lu has tried hundreds of kinds of traditional motifs and patterns, but she gradually found that although paper cutting has been passed down through many generations, the themes and the forms of this

art still remained basically the same. She hopes to inject some creative innovation into this ancient art. Turning to foreign sources for inspiration, such as Andersen's fairy tales, is one way of doing this.

Lu made a series of paper cuts representing scenes and characters from Andersen's most popular stories, hoping to interest a wider audience in paper cutting. “His fairy tales are an international language. I wanted people to see these familiar stories through Chinese paper cutting.”



Lu donated 112 paper cuts to the Hans Christian Andersen Museum in Denmark.

Photo provided by Lu Xue

## A cock and a cut

Born in a quiet village near Tai'an city in Shandong province, Lu recalls being a naughty girl when she was small. “So it seems strange to me now that a naughty girl could become fond of something as intricate and requiring as much patience as paper cutting,” Lu says.

Lu's mother made extra money for the family by embroidering. A cutout of a peony made by Lu's mother as a pattern for one of her embroideries suddenly opened up a new world to six-year-old Lu.

“Those paper cuttings made by my mother were familiar to me and I had never thought them anything special, but that beautiful cutout of a peony really struck me and I decided to learn how to do it.”

“My first model for a paper cut was the big cock raised by my family,” she says. Little Lu tied the poor creature to a tree in order to observe it closely, and proceeded to make the cutout with her mother's

scissors. She put the finished cutout on the table, waiting eagerly for her mother's judgement.

“My mother was very surprised and happy to see my paper cutting and immediately started teaching me all the skills involved in making them,” Lu continues. From then on, she always carried a pair of scissors and some paper with her, making cuts of anything that caught her eye: clouds, flowers, plants and animals were the main subjects.

Her works soon became popular among relatives and neighbors who would ask her to make some cuttings as decorations for weddings and festivals.

## A journey into the unknown

Lu describes herself as a determined person. “My friends say I'm a bit crazy.” One of her “crazy” ideas came when she decided on the spur of a moment to seek out the artist who had created a particularly beautiful paper cut she saw in a paper.

After graduating from middle school, Lu made ends meet working as a baby sitter in Tai'an city. She spent the rest of her time studying high school courses at home and making her paper cuttings, which had become an important way of expressing herself over the years. Making meager wages as a baby sitter showed a harsh reality to the young country girl, and she could only find escape in her own paper-cut world.

“One day I saw two paper cuttings of flowers in a newspaper,” Lu remembers. “I was amazed by their wonderful design and superb technique.”

She wanted to find out where the artist lived and learn from him or her. She discovered the artist lived in Pu county, Shanxi province. So 16-year-old Lu got on the train to Shanxi with a small scissors and just 20 yuan in her pocket, a loan from her mother. A single ticket to Shanxi cost 9 yuan at that time. It was her first trip on a train and first journey alone.

Three days later she finally found the house where the artist lived. Standing at the

gate in a remote village at 10 o'clock in the evening without much money left and nowhere to stay, she wondered what to do next. “A very old couple came out and greeted me warmly. When they found out my interest, they treated me as though I was their own daughter just coming back home after school.” The couple had no children and the wife spent most of her time making paper cuttings.

Lu stayed in the couple's home for two months, learning the skills of paper cutting from the wife and doing some farm work for them. “The most important thing was that I learned not only the skills, but also the real spirit of paper cutting, and this became a lifelong passion for me.” The risk had paid off.

After coming back from Shanxi, young Lu headed on to other cities to learn more skills. Traveling expenses were always heavy and she usually had no spare money to buy any food and remained hungry on the way home, but her passion for paper cutting kept her going.

## Writer, teacher and paper cut artist

“Actually, what I really wanted when I was a child was to be a writer,” Lu says. She wrote a novel of 200,000 words at 19, and showed it to a knowledgeable relative. The relative didn't say too much about the book, but was impressed by the paper cuttings she had used as illustrations. The relative advised her to focus on paper cutting and to hold a small exhibition. The exhibition was surprisingly successful, and Lu thought she might be able to make a career out of it.

Her works were soon on display in national and international exhibitions. More people showed interest in this unique ancient art.

Lu's paper cuts went down particularly well with foreigners. Several years ago, Lu held an exhibition in the US. An American woman aged about 80 came up to her and said she wanted to learn paper cutting from her. Actually, people of all ages expressed their interest in this old art during the exhibition. Lu gave some lessons to as many as 70

foreign students. This interest in paper cutting encouraged her to start a school in her hometown in 1997.

“I hoped Chinese people, especially young people, would be interested in paper cutting, but...” Lu pauses for a moment. Lu had invested all her money to run a paper cutting school in her hometown, but to her surprise just one boy applied. “I was so disappointed at that time.”

Nevertheless, Lu continues organizing paper-cutting activities for children and young people. “I'm always hoping to encourage young

people to take up this old art,” she says, “and then maybe some of them will take it as seriously as I do.”

Interestingly, Lu's four-year-old daughter is extremely fond of scissors. Lu can always stop her crying by putting a small scissors in her hand. Lu has had to prepare some very blunt scissors for her, but she still cuts anything she can get hold of. Quills, books, cloth have all become her targets. “Maybe, she'll follow in my footsteps,” Lu says, with a big smile.



Photos by Wang Wei



The entry to the unknown eunuch's tomb

# Road Building Exposes Ancient Tombs

By Iris Miao

Excavation of a Ming tomb in north west Beijing was completed last Friday by the Beijing Cultural Relics Research Institute. The structure of the tomb, discovered in the course of widening Wutasi Lu (Road), indicates it was built for a eunuch.

Two characters engraved on the lintel of the stone door of the tomb, "Jing Xuan," mean literally "a calm place." The door is decorated with two animal-head handles. Staff from the institute say there is no evidence to suggest that the tomb has been robbed, and that the disintegration of the coffin was caused by water seeping into the tomb over the ages.

Along with the bones of the tomb's occupant, a copper coin, a jade belt and a white glazed porcelain jar were also discovered.

The four characters on the coin "Jiajing Tongbao," indicate that it was in circulation during the reign of Emperor Jiajing (1522-1566), the 12th emperor of the Ming Dynasty.

According to staff from the institute, it is not unusual for the tomb of a eunuch to contain few burial articles.



White glazed porcelain jar found in the tomb.

Photos by Cao Boyuan

The tomb site has now been reburied and construction of the road has resumed. "It is routine that we don't excavate a relic site unless it interferes with the construction," a spokesman for the Cultural Relics Institute told *Beijing Today*, "besides it is safer to keep them underground. We don't have enough people to carry out all the excavations and to take care of what is unearthed afterwards."

Eunuchs often wielded great power and influence during the Ming Dynasty, and for those who could afford it, the countryside toward the Western Hills was a desirable location for burial. Over one hundred Ming-era eunuch tombs have been discovered in this part of Beijing.

With the construction of Wutasi Lu, from Baiyi Lu to the West Third Ring Road, over 60 tombs from different periods have been unearthed. Generally, those shallow tombs inadvertently exposed are excavated and catalogued, and then reburied after the precise location has been mapped. Exceptions are made only for those with significant historical or academic value.

## Sunken Treasure

By Iris Miao

A team of divers are preparing to mount a second expedition to recover treasures from a thousand-year-old shipwreck off the south west coast of Guangdong Province. Since the sensational retrieval of over 4,000 gold, silver, bronze, iron and porcelain relics from the wreck last March, speculation has been rife about the 60,000 to 80,000 artifacts archeologists estimate remain inside.

The diving team will comprise of experts from the National Museum's Underwater Archaeology Research Center and the Guangdong Archaeology Research Institute.

### Thousand-year-old ship

The underwater archaeology team surveyed and carried out a partial excavation of the ship, the *South Sea No. 1*, in March last year.

According to a spokesman for the team, the 30-meter-long, 10-meter-wide wreck, lying 20 meters below the surface and covered by two meters of silt, is the largest Song ship ever discovered. Unusual for a shipwreck, instead of lying on its side or upside down, the *South Sea No. 1* is sitting upright on the seabed, and is in excellent condition, given that it has been there for nearly a millennium. The wooden sides of the ship are still as hard as new, and reverberate when struck.

Archaeologists say the wreck will provide a rare opportunity to study ancient ship building techniques and navigation technology.

Director of the Yangjiang Culture Bureau, Zou Ququan, says the city is planning to build an underwater archaeological museum, which will feature a massive glass tank constructed specially to hold the *South Sea No. 1*, in which the water and temperature will be the same as that of the seabed.

### Priceless treasures

The team broke a window to enter the ship. From a cabinet only several cubic meters, they recovered over 4,000 articles, including high-quality porcelain ware from famous kilns in Fujian and Jiangxi. Most of the pieces were in perfect condition, better preserved than similar items unearthed from tombs and other archeological sites. One bowl was identical to one that sold recently for several hundred thousand dollars at an auction in the US.

Experts have determined that the

ship was bound for the Middle East. Among the artifacts recovered, some were clearly made for the foreign market. A large porcelain bowl with a trumpet shaped mouth is of a style not before seen in China, yet it is similar to bowls used in the Middle East. Some porcelain jewelry boxes were also obviously made for foreign customers.

The discovery of the *South Sea No. 1* proves that China thousand of years ago was manufacturing goods to order for international trade.

Experts estimate that the number of artifacts on the ship will reach 60,000 to 80,000. All the items will be collected by the museum of Yangjiang, says Zheng Youjian, deputy mayor of the city.

### Whose ship?

The ancient sea route to the Middle East, known as the "Sea Silk Road," along with the Silk Road through north west China, were bridges connecting east and west. However, no hard evidence had been found to prove the existence of the sea route prior to the discovery of *South Sea No. 1*.

Experts say that there may have been foreigners on board the ship judging from the golden belt and bracelet discovered in the previous excavation. Some daily utensils, including a rusted iron cooking pot still containing a piece of pork bone were also discovered, yet so far, no traces of human remains have been found. It is hoped that the identity of the owner of the ship and the cause of its sinking will be revealed in the next stage of excavation.

### Protection — primary goal

The excavation this year will only cover part of the ship, says Zheng Youjian, and given current technological limitations in terms of protecting antiques, it may not be possible to raise the ship from the seabed in the near future.

Zou Ququan says that the provincial government has allocated two million yuan for experts to work out a plan to salvage the whole ship without any damage.

According to historical records, there were over 100 ship crash accidents before 1840, the number of the wrecks were countless. With a steady stream of wrecks being discovered off the coast of Guangdong in recent years, the area is turning into an archaeology gold coast.



Some of the treasures recovered from the South Sea No.1.

Photo by Ma Wenrong

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By Yu Shanshan

This spring will see rock'n'roll history in China when the legendary Rolling Stones take the stage in two gigs, one of which will be held in the capital. The prospects of the biggest name in rock coming to the mainland has many music fans going crazy, and no one is more excited than the local rock deity Cui Jian.

The shows became official at a press conference held last Thursday in the Kunlun Hotel that drew a veritable army of domestic and foreign press.

"In late December last year, we confirmed that the Stones would come. But only at 7:30 this morning did we finally get the documents that made the concerts official," announced Chen Jixin, president of Beijing Time New Century Entertainment Company, the company promoting the Stones in China. "Now I am happy to announce the band is scheduled to play two gigs in China — one in Shanghai on April 1, and the other in Beijing on April 4."

For Cui Jian, recognized as the father of Chinese rock, those words spelled the realization of a long-cherished dream and a bit of vindication as well. The same day he heard his heroes were coming to town in February, Cui received a call from Chen Jixin, asking him what was basically a rhetorical question: "Would you like to open for the Rolling Stones?"

"I never thought that my three dreams, seeing a Stones show, performing with the Stones, and taking the stage again at a big venue here in my hometown of Beijing, could come true. Only after I put the phone down did I realize what had just happened. And then I started sweating," Cui admitted.

Rumors of the Stones rolling into China started circulating in May 2002, when the band said in New York that they might make it here during their 2002-2003 Forty Licks World Tour. That tour kicked off in Boston in September, shortly after which Beijing Time New Century Entertainment connected with the Rolling Stones' management. By the end of 2002, the word was out, and Chinese rock fans were abuzz with visions of the veteran rockers strutting their stuff.

At another press conference held in Tokyo last Friday, guitarist Keith Richards quipped about the China gigs, "It's about time they let us in."

The Beijing show will be held at the Workers' Gymnasium, which seats up to 8,000. One thousand of the tickets will be given away though mobile phone short message activities and oth-



## You Can Sometimes Get What You Want

Cui Jian at last Thursday press conference Photo by Lu Beifeng



er promotions, and one-third of the remaining spots have already been reserved via the promoters' hotline. Filling the rest of the seats, however, could actually prove a challenge for a band that in its past two tours repeated sold out 50,000-plus seat venues in the US and Europe.

One of the problems confronting the show's promoters is the time crunch. "We have only one month to discuss piles of documents with the band's management and prepare the venues," Chen said.

A more illusive, issue, however, is the fickle local music scene. Though Cui Jian and others feel started up about the Stones' arrival, many local newspapers have reported that response in Beijing has been rather lukewarm. Perhaps as a result of age differences, many home-grown rock artists cannot even quote Stones' lyrics. Local pop star Xu Wei said, "I didn't collect

all their albums like I did with the Beatles. I just got two or three."

The younger British band Suede learned about the difficulties of the domestic music market when they held two shows in Beijing in February. According to some reports, only around 500 tickets were sold for each gig, filling less than half the seats in the Chaoyang Gymnasium — and Suede has a solid fan base in this country.

"I have been listening to their songs for almost twenty years. I have always loved their music and felt close in spirit to them, but of course they were always actually very far away," said Cui. The Chinese rocker ain't no stranger to the ups and downs of the domestic music scene, but there's no way he's going to pass up this once-in-lifetime chance to kick it with the Stones. And that is a picture rock music fans should find very satisfying.

## Crossing the Line from Art to Offense

By Yu Shanshan

After seeing some of the experimental performance art pieces at the 2000 Shanghai Biennial art festival, artist and critic Chen Lusheng had enough. He set his mind on taking an in-depth look at the extreme cruelty and horror that have become commonplace in performance art in China.

"I couldn't figure it out," he said, "is eating a dead baby really art? Does it make any sense, say, to kill an animal in order to spread the message of protecting animals?"

Chen, 47, a research fellow at the Chinese Painting Research Institute, has culled his observations into the book, *In the Name of Art*, published by the People's Fine Arts Publishing House in mid-February. The work is divided into seven chapters, each headed by an editorial. Chen wrote for the newspaper *Art Journal* and filled with records of questionable art uncovered in his two years of study.

Each chapter looks at one problem in the field of performance art, from self-mutilation, manipulating dead bodies, or butchering animals in installations to exploiting poor people and public body painting sessions. Through photos and descriptions of these kinds of performances, Chen tries to raise the question of the real value of such extreme actions. "Not every creation can be called a work of art — there has to be some base line, and they don't make it," he said.

After relatively innocuous beginnings in the 1980s, in the past three years or so, some domestic performance artists have become hung up on using extreme means to express their views about society, the environment and other themes, a change that has at least helped them garner widespread media attention.

Chen's work against this trend has become a personal crusade. "There has got to be an opposing voice that can try to give some perspective and counter these abominations," he said.



*In the Name of 'Art' sells at 42.00 yuan*

Not everyone, however, has jumped on Chen's bandwagon. In an article in the February 24 issue of *China Newsweek* magazine, the performance artist Qiu Zhijie claimed that Chen Lusheng has "demonized" Chinese performance art. Chen responded, "I haven't demonized them, they made monsters of themselves." He added that while the mass media may not agree with the performance artists' actions, their coverage has actually only helped them.

It is on those grounds that in the book, Chen decided not to disclose any of his subjects' names and to block out their faces in photos. "I don't want to help them get the fame they are so desperate for," he explained.

The government has also tried to make things difficult for these questionable artists, as the Ministry of Culture announced in April 2001, "a complete ban on any bloody, brutal or pornographic displays made in the name

of art."

And yet the offensive performances continue. Chinese experimental art has proven especially popular overseas, with hundreds of potentially offensive installments or records of performance pieces being bought or otherwise ending up in the hands of foreign collectors, researchers and artists. Chen said he is dismayed by this trend, because, "As long as there are buyers for this kind of art, it will keep being churned out."



*Chen Lusheng*

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# Morcheeba Play Beijing



Paul Godfrey, Skye Edwards and Ross Godfrey

## Cruel Satire Provokes Debate

By Dong Nan

A graduation presentation by students of the China Central Academy of Drama has been quietly provoking a controversy since it opened last week at the China Children's Theatre.

The play, titled *Dear Elena Sergeevna*, is based on a script written by Russian dramatist Ludmilla Razumovskaya. It tells the story of a group of students who set out to coerce their teacher, a fragile but altruistic young woman, into altering their grades for a final exam, satirizing society and the education system.

Many teachers and parents have expressed concern about the cruel activities of the children in the drama, saying they fear the vivid depictions of atrocities will be "misleading to teenagers."

"I don't want my little daughter to watch the drama," said one father, during a group discussion after the performance, "Of course, I can understand those evil actions reveal the dark side of human nature, but I am afraid she cannot."

Drama critic Cheng Shiru maintains such worries are groundless, "We underestimate students' insight. In fact, they are intellectual enough to appreciate a drama and make distinctions between right and wrong. I think there is no need for adults to tell them what to do all the time."

**Where:** China Children's Theatre **When:** till March 19, 7:30 pm



Miserable teacher and cruel students

## A Brand New Swan Lake

By Dong Nan

Ballet fans who enjoyed the Russian National Ballet and Ballet Stars of Moscow's Spring Festival performance of *Swan Lake*, have another opportunity to see this immortal piece this month. The National Ballet of China will premiere its new version of *Swan Lake* tonight at Tianqiao Theatre.

Swan Lake has been part of the repertoire of the National Ballet of China since 1959, and has never been significantly modified. Traditionalists should beware, there are major changes in this version. Notably, Rothbart, the evil magician participates in the *Black Swan Pas de Deux* in the third act; and the hero, Prince Siegfried dies with Rothbart at the end instead of destroying him. New choreography, costumes and



Black Swan Pas de Deux

stage design, as well as the use of advanced multimedia technology, mean this is truly a new production.

"We are determined to try new things and let the market test the result," says artistic director Wang Caijun, "Chinese ballet needs such kind of originality."

**Where:** Tianqiao Theatre **When:** March 14-16, 7:30 pm

## TV Star Goes Pop

By Dong Nan

TV super star Zhou Xun will launch her musical career with a new album titled *Summer* this April.

*Living Color*, the lively single from the forthcoming album has already been put on high rotation by several local radio stations.

Rising to fame in a string of TV soap operas, including *Palace of Desire*, *Ripening of Tangerine* and the yet-to-be-released but bound-to-be-a-hit *The Legend of the Condor Heroes*, Zhou is not only known for her smart looks and the lovable characters she plays, but also her distinctively husky vocal style. She says she is confident that the quality of her music will not let her fans down.

However her upcoming musical debut poses a major challenge for her in overcoming the inevitable comparisons with those of other TV stars, including three releases by Zhao Wei and an imminent one by Lu Yi.



Zhou Xun

## WORLDWIDE



### War Will Not Stop the Oscars

War with Iraq or no war, the Oscars show will go on, organizers vowed on Monday as they brought together the class of 2002 for the annual nominees lunch and delivered the traditional and often ignored warning about keeping acceptance speeches short and sweet.

The nominees crammed the stage for the traditional "class picture" with director Martin Scorsese crunched next to Salma Hayek. Nicolas Cage, wearing loud print shirt and blue jeans, took a spot on the far left and later Jack Nicholson could be seen huddling in deep conversation with Nicole Kidman. **(Reuters)**



Protesting procession

### Show Goes on as Broadway Strike Ends

Striking musicians settled a contract dispute with theatre producers yesterday, ending a walkout that shut down 18 musicals since Friday.

Shows resumed last night after the strikers agreed to a few musicians in the largest Broadway theatres.

The dispute that led to Friday's strike was over minimums, the smallest number of musicians required for a Broadway orchestra.

That figure is set by the size of the theatre, with the largest houses currently requiring 24 to 26 musicians.

The strike affected about 325 musicians. **(AP)**

### Brit Invasion Into Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame honored the second British invasion on Monday night, inducting the Clash, The Police

and Elvis Costello and the Attractions on an emotional night at the Waldorf Hotel.

Australian hard rock band AC/DC and the Righteous Brothers were also honored at the 18th annual induction for the hall, but the British influence dominated as did anti-war sentiments expressed by a number of star musicians.

"It's a very good night to be British," said Sir Elton John, a 1994 Hall of Fame inductee, in introducing Elvis Costello and the Attractions.

"Three of the greatest bands in the last 30 years to come out of Britain are being honored tonight." **(AP)**



Sting on stage

### Rap Music Stars Wrestle in New Video Game

In a marketing first for the embattled music industry, rap label Def Jam will soon release a compilation by some of its top artists — not on CD or in a movie, but in a video game.

The hotly anticipated game Def Jam Vendetta, pairs Def Jam, a unit of Vivendi Universal's Universal Music Group, the world's largest music company, with Electronic Arts, the largest independent video publisher.

The game, due out April 1, features the like of rap stars DMX and Method Man and a storyline that brings together the worlds of wrestling and hip-hop. **(Reuters)**

### Bringing Down the House Tops Box Office

Steve Martin and Queen Latifah packed the house.

Their comedy *Bringing Down the House*, about an escaped con who enlists an uptight attorney to clear her name, debuted as the No. 1 weekend movie with \$31.1 million. **(AP)**



Steve Martin and Queen Latifah

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Photos by Cui Hao

By Hong lei

Anyone with hoop dreams or visions of baseball or extreme sports glory will get a kick out of DCShoeCoUSA, a store located in a corner of Longfu Plaza.

The small shop features a wide range of equipment and apparel for playing and appreciating basketball, baseball and extreme sports. The shelves are stocked with skating goods from major brands like DC, lots of shoes and jerseys from professional basketball and baseball teams, including copies of those worn by NBA superstars such as Michael Jordan, Vince Carter and Ray Allen, priced from 450 yuan to 1,000 yuan. On the wall hangs a black official T-shirt from when Jordan and his Chicago Bulls won their sixth NBA championship, a little piece of basketball history that goes for 260 yuan.



NBA team badges, 5 yuan each

## They're Playin' Basketball

Customers with smaller needs or pocketbooks need not be dismayed - this store has things to make all kinds of fans happy. Fun smaller items include a range of sports-related figurines. Some are silly, such as little versions of Kobe Bryant, Karl Malone and Shaquille O'Neal with bobbing, oversized heads and a price tag of 50 yuan each, far lower than the nearly \$20 dollars

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they would sell for in the US.

Serious fans may be more interested in miniature models of players in action poses. These mini players encompass stars of today and yesteryear, allowing fans to recreate scenes of Larry Bird squaring off against Magic Johnson, and Patrick Ewing and Kevin McHale battling in the paint. Though these are collectors' items, they fetch only 30 yuan each.

Die-hard sports fans can round out their looks with a variety of accessories, such as badges from every NBA team (5 yuan each), finger skateboards (50 yuan) and key rings (5 yuan a piece).

The store's owner, Ahong, is a serious

basketball fan himself. In the middle of the store stands a display of around 40 pairs of 8cm-long Air Jordan shoes from different generations. "They are my personal collection, just for fun and not for sale," he said.

**Where:** 1 Qianjie, Longfu Plaza, Chaoyangmennei Dajie, Dongcheng  
**Open:** 10 am - 8:30 pm **Tel:** 6406 0314



Lundag figurine, 200 yuan per set

## Precious Paper Pictures

By Salinda

Here's an idea for a do-it-yourself gift or home decoration - paper sculpture, a fun, easy and inexpensive art form available at the Sunflower Paper Art Workshop in Sanlitun.

Paper sculpture is a relatively easy form of art crafted from carefully cut and pasted layers of thick, printed paper that create fun, three-dimensional images.

Prospective artists start with prepared packages, each of which comes with four identical prints of the same picture. One is used as the base, while sections of the other copies are cut out with special knives and then applied one after another to create the shadows and elevated effects that make paper sculpture pieces literally jump off the page.

Subject matter varies widely, from cartoons to Western-style paintings to scenes from old Beijing. Already finished pictures of Snoopy, a group of fairies, or a scene of a teahouse from China's past sell for 100 to 600 yuan depending on size. Doing it yourself, though, can cut those prices in almost half.

Store owner Yu Hong is a patient



Paper doll, 38 yuan

teacher of first timers and provides all the tools and advice her customers need for free. She recommends greenhorn paper sculptors try their hand first at the store, in order to save time and money, while seasoned artists are welcome to take the packages home to put together at their leisure.

Yu can also teach customers to fold paper into beautiful, delicate flowers, dolls and other items that make great home decorations. Pre-made versions, such as paper roses and irises, are available and priced at just 6 yuan a "stem".

**Where:** No. 2, Sanlitun Dajie, between the Yaxiu Clothes Market and KFC, Chaoyang **Open:** 10 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 6416 0380



A scene of Qing officials, 328 yuan

Photos by Li Shuzhuan

## It's a Wrap

By Lisa Huang

The platitudes to the contrary are many: "You can't judge a book by its cover", "it's the thought that counts"... Unfortunately, there are times when gifts do matter, and in those situations, their presentation is crucial. Quality of wrapping is often overlooked, perhaps in part because it can be a joyless affair, but that does not have to be the case. The professionals at a small store in Xidan can help gift givers hand over personalized packages at low cost and minimal effort.

The wide variety of wrapping paper samples hung on the wall make it clear this is no ordinary packaging place. A whimsical, romantic choice is paper plastered with kissing fish, with bubbles coming from their mouths that spell "love." More platonic wishes can be expressed by a blue paper bearing delicate sail boats printed with the Chinese saying "yi fan feng shun", which means "may everything go smoothly."



Among the store's wide stock of wrapping choices, silk paper is the most popular. "Its semi-transparent quality produces a mysterious, suspenseful feeling," said Yan Na, the owner of the store, who has over seven years of experience in the wrapping business. She takes this work seriously, and guarantees there is no gift too big or small that she cannot wrap beautifully.

Going a step beyond simple paper, the store also offers bows, ribbons and other extras, such as a pair of silver strings pierced by a golden arrow perfect for love-inspired presents. The average cost for getting a gift wrapped is around 20 yuan. If the original base packaging is unsatisfactory, boxes in a wide range of patterns and shapes are also for sale, priced from 5 to 60 yuan.

**Where:** sixth floor of Xidan Huawei Shopping Center, Xicheng **Open:** 9 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 13801 384135



Photos by Cui Hao

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By James Liu

After years of quiet near-obscure, the historic area surrounding the two lakes that make up Shishahai have become the favored hangout of Beijing's most hip. That transfer could be the result of the razing of Bohemian university bars in Haidian, the homogenization of every bar in north Sanlitun street into the same hodge-podge of overpriced weak drinks and anonymous pop warblings, or the slow death of many of major local discos, but whatever the reason, people are coming to Qianhai and Houhai to hang out, and they are coming in droves.

In the past two years, new restaurants and bars have sprung up along the banks of these lakes almost monthly, looking to draw some of the cool milling crowds. As of last Friday, our *Beijing Today* reporters counted 41 establishments ringing the lakes or close to them – a massive change from before the new millennium, when that count could be done on two hands.

The appeal of the Houhai area is easy to see. The shallow lakes are beautiful, if sometimes a little fragrant, and the area just south of Houhai is a protected stretch of well-preserved hutong, home to old Beijingers and nouveau riche alike. The bars and restaurants in the lake area have generally gone for a mellow style, with decent drinks, jazzy tunes and comfy furniture, lots of which can be pulled outside to enjoy the fresh air in warmer weather.

Sitting on the banks of the lakes or in front of a window looking out at them is a great way to pass a slow Sunday or wind down after work, especially now that Spring is well on the way. In this fun part of town, it's entirely possible to forget you're in a booming metropolis of millions and find peace of mind nowhere else downtown can offer.



#### Nanjiuwangdan Bar

By James Liu

In Tibetan, "nanjiuwangdan" means "absolutely free." While this bar's menu does not follow up on that claim, its décor at least lives up to the Tibetan theme with murals and wall hangings of Tibetan design. However, the only Tibetan item on the menu is butter tea (*suyou cha*, 20 yuan).

The space is divided by a row of bamboo into one public area, outfitted with cozy sofas and simple iron chairs, and four private rooms. It seems to draw a young, fashionable crowd. The private rooms are more likely to attract the high rollers, as simple entry costs 380 yuan. That money doesn't buy anything except temporary pride and the right to use the TVs and DVD players set up in each room.

The bilingual menu lists 35 cocktail varieties, far more than most nearby competitors. Snacks are also available, including fried chicken wings (28 yuan), that are fresh and nicely salty, but a bit greasy, and french fries the staff insists are "better than those at McDonald's."

**Add:** No. 4 Qianhai Beiyuan, Xicheng **Open:** 2 pm - midnight **Tel:** 6651 0187 **Average cost:** 80 yuan per person and up



#### Locations of bars and restaurants in the region

The bars and restaurants are in the colored areas of the map.

- ⑪
1. Shuaifu Restaurant
  2. Zuoan Bar
  3. Nanjiuwangdan Café
  4. Xiaoju Café
  5. Buddha Bar III
  6. Yipinxing Teahouse
  7. Buddha Bar II
  8. The Bridge
  9. Buddha Bar I
  10. Wenjin Bar
  11. Qiaoshuijia Café
  12. Wanghaiyiran Bar
  13. Jack Bar (liehuo fenghuang)

- ②
14. Hutong Xieyi Café
  15. Liutangting Café
  16. Chanmao Café
  17. Tingyue Café
  18. Wave Café
  19. Houhai Café
  20. Minyinfang Café
  21. Dou Bar
  22. Hami Bar
  23. Chajiafu Teahouse
  24. Kongyiji Restaurant
  25. Bank Café (Xi'an Kafei)
  26. Xinjiang Xinbu Restaurant
  27. Fuku Restaurant
  28. Wanghaixuan Teahouse

- ③
29. Golden Titian Café
  30. Anon Snack Restaurant
  31. Khan Restaurant (Closed on December 31 last year)
  32. Grill Ji Restaurant
  33. Nuage Restaurant
  34. Laobai's Bar
  35. Yun Restaurant
  - ④
  36. Qingping Dumpling Restaurant
  37. Lotus Root
  38. Red Storey
  39. Huzhongyue Café

Picture by Laodu

#### Liutangting Café

By Hong Lei

Liutangting is a new entrant to the scene on the south bank of Houhai. Its décor pursues a traditional Chinese aesthetic, strengthened by the lantern-lined corridor that leads from the door to the inside.

Stepping inside, customers are first hit by the light smell of burning incense and the pluck sounds of the *zheng*, the Chinese zither. The bar is broken into one large space and two smaller rooms. The overall feel, set up by the potted bamboo plants, red wood tables and chairs, traditional lanterns and paintings of street scenes from imperial Beijing, is a retreat in time. Wine bottles are even wrapped in elegant covers of red or blue silk.

The two small rooms offer intimate surroundings, one with four lounge chairs around an old square table, the other with a bevy of sofas circling a small cof-

fee table. However, only parties that order at least 360 yuan of drinks and food can gain access to these mini sanctums.

In the main room, snacks and beverages go for a normal 15 to 30 yuan. When warm weather arrives, look for performances of Chinese folk and classical music.

**Add:** 12 Nanyuan Houhai, Xicheng **Open:** 2 pm - 2 am weekdays, 10 am - 3 am weekends **Tel:** 6617 7371



#### Houhai Café

By Liang Hongling

At the south end of the strip of bars on the west bank of Shishahai stands Houhai Café, already a fixture in the local nightlife scene. The bar has spartan decor of white walls, five wooden tables and two couches. Though it may seem plain, it is a favorite of many foreign residents of Beijing, who come to drink up the café's secret: awesome coffee.

The seats near the window are the best for enjoying a cup of top coffee or something stronger while watching the waters of Houhai ripple and lucky fishermen haul in the occasional sketchy catch.

Another strength of Houhai Café is its parties, including a smashing success held last summer. Look for more good times as the weather warms up.

**Add:** 20 Houhainanyan, Xicheng District **Open:** 2 pm - 2am **Tel:** 6613 6209 **Average cost:** 30 yuan per person



#### Minyifang

By Hong Lei

This small teahouse stands out from the pack by creating a rich feel of rural life in northeast China. The festive flavor comes in part from the tiny red lanterns that hang from the building's eaves, and the traditional red paper cuts stuck in the windows.

Brightly colored lanterns also light up the inside. The overall vibe of the place is rustic, but fun, with two wooden swing chairs near the door and colorful kites hung high on the walls. The lower parts are covered in bright red cloth printed with blossoming flowers that looks straight from the village. Some parts of the walls bear pictures drawn by customers, something the management encourages.

Snacks cost 8 to 15 yuan, and most drinks are priced at 15 to 30 yuan, including the special house health tea.

**Add:** 7 Xiaoxiangfeng Hutong, Xicheng **Open:** 1 pm - 0 am **Tel:** 6611 7436



#### Bank Coffee

By James Liu

This two-story establishment at the far-western corner of Houhai Lake is the first and only Western restaurant in the area. Its design takes advantage of the elegance of its location with huge French windows, modern paintings on the walls and indoor fountains spurting from the

floor. Bank Coffee (Xi'an Kafei) started trial operation on Valentine's Day and is gearing up for an official launch this month.

Standing out from its *pingfang* neighbors, the restaurant looks like a crystal palace, especially when lit up at night. The inside is decorated with tasteful red sofas, wood furniture and spiral staircases leading to the elegant second floor. Right now the bar serves wine, spirits and snacks, but soon the whole place will change into a wine bar offering top-quality western cuisine, according to manager Wang Yinan.

"Our aim is to be the best bar, with the best wine, best décor and best service. That's the only way to live up to the beauty of the outside scenery," he said.

For now, the bar offers rich coffee brewed from imported beans, which justifies its steep price with its high quality. Whether the rest of Bank Coffee's offerings will come off as well remains to be seen.

**Add:** No. 22 Houhai Xiyan, Xicheng **Open:** 10 am - midnight **Tel:** 8403 6256 ext. 205 **Average cost:** 100 yuan per person and up



#### Laobai's Bar

By Hong Lei

One of the first bars in the Houhai area, Bai Feng's bar, also called the No Name, still enjoys a special reputation among the lakeside establishments.

The unmarked joint sits near Yinding bridge, and with the many potted trees and plants in front of its door, is easy to overlook.

Walking through the three doors to the bar, customers enter a funky world. The ceiling is made of thick plastic that lets in some of the light that sustains the plants that dominate the whole place. Authentic antique furniture is mixed with Japanese carp flags and oddly-shaped Arabian-style lamps, creating an international feel that suits the multicultural clientele.

Most drinks range from 15 yuan to 30 yuan, and snacks are

limited to popcorn. This is more a place to unwind and converse than to drink hard or get full. Be sure to check out the bathroom, arguably the initiator of the groovy toilet trend that has swept hip restaurants around the city (such as Nuage, the Vietnamese restaurant also run by Bai Feng right behind the No Name bar).

**Add:** 3 Qianhai Dongyan, Xicheng **Open:** 1 pm - 1 am **Tel:** 6401 8541



#### Lotus Root Bar

By Liang Hongling

Picturesque Yandai Xiejie hutong, which connects the lake area with the road just below the Drum Tower, is home to two bars, Lotus and Lotus Root, owned and run by the same people. Lotus was the first, and has been a successful peddler of booze, coffee and a wide selection of Chinese and foreign tea for around two years. It has a classy yet casual air that has won it a solid base of customers looking for late-night coffee, afternoon tea or a quiet drink.

The environment around the bars is definitely part of their appeal. Walking down this hutong is to walk back in time into old Beijing, with courtyard houses, storefronts with ornate wood carvings, ancient sycamore trees and squawking street vendors.

Two months ago, Lotus spawned Lotus Root, a restaurant bar that dishes up solid Thai food and a wide range of beverages. Most of the ingredients are actually flown in from Thailand to ensure their freshness and authenticity. The management recommends the popular green papaya salad, but whatever your choice, Lotus Root is a good bet for good food in a joint with a cool, historic feel.

**Add:** 29 Yandai Xiejie, Xicheng **Open:** 6 pm - 2 am **Tel:** 6407 7857 **Average Cost:** 80 yuan per person



Photos by Zhuang Jian

## The Wiggles



Thw Wiggles with their friends

Australian pop superstars *The Wiggles* will play two performances in Beijing. *The Wiggles* have been a favorite amongst young children and parents in Australia for over 11 years. The band is made up of four male kindergarten educationalists, Greg, Murray, Jeff and Anthony. They will dance and sing on stage. The band comes complete with four cartoon characters who sing and dance with the four: Dorothy the Dinosaur, Wags the Dog, Henry the Octopus, and Captain Feathersword. After performing in Beijing, *The Wiggles* will perform in Shanghai on March 26 and 27.

**Where:** Century Theatre **When:** March 19, 4 pm and 6 pm; March 20, 10 am, 2 pm, and 12 pm **Admission:** 200 yuan **Tel:** 8527 6466 ext 811

## Jams

### Heavy Music

Tomorrow night Preaching Day (*Shijiao Ri*) will perform. On Sunday night some new bands including What (*Shenmo*), Slap (*Erguang*), Color (*Yanse*), Happy Street (*Xingfu Dajie*), Upper Body Connection (*Lianshangti*) and Ooze (*Qin*) will warm up the venue.

**Where:** Get Lucky, 500 meters east of the south gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** 9:30 pm **Admission:** adults 40 yuan, students 30 yuan **Tel:** 6429 9109

### What at What

Tonight Wednesday's Trip (*Xingqisan De Luxing*), psychedelic rock with a pinch of trip hop, will be on stage. On March 20, Forest (*Shenlin*) will perform.

**Where:** What, opposite north gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** 9 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 13910 209249



Hernan Cattaneo

### Hernan Cattaneo

After more than ten years performing in the best clubs of Argentina, Hernan Cattaneo is one of the most respected DJs in South America. His influences come from 80s Chicago House and from a more progressive European 90s sound. He's been wowing crowds from his hometown of Buenos Aires to Ibiza to Britain, and brings his funky breaks to Beijing as part of the club's now monthly international events. Local DJs, including Dio, will also perform.

**Where:** Kiss Super Club, 35 Xiaoyunlu, Chaoyang **When:** March 14, 9:30 pm **Admission:** 60 yuan (includes a drink) **Tel:** 8455 2361 ext 216

### MonkeyFunk

Daddy Vegas returns with crates of vintage 45s ready to funk you up. Also appearing is Shanghai-based DJ V-Nutz, bringing not only the hottest hip hop around but also his famous scratching skills.

**Where:** The Club, building no. 43, Beisanlitun Nanli, Chaoyang **When:** March 15, 9:30 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 6417 7791

### Beijing Night Show

This six-act show includes a wide range of Chinese performing arts, from traditional music, dancing and acrobatics to Beijing opera and minority folk dance.

**Where:** Beijing Night Show, 1 Dayabao Hutong, Dongcheng **When:** Moday - Sunday, 8-9 pm **Admission:** 200-500 yuan **Tel:** 6527 2815, 800 8101282

## Movies



Kye Doo-sik and his classmate

### My Boss, My Hero

Directed by Yoon Je-kyun, starring Jung Joon-ho, Jeong Wun-taek, Jung Wung-in and Song Sun-mi. Kye Doo-sik is the second-in-command of a mob gang. Though he has successfully expanded his boss' territory by defeating a rival gang, he is prevented from moving up in the criminal organization due to his lack of a high school diploma. Thus, Doo-sik is ordered by his boss to go back to school. Unfortunately, he quickly learns that high

school life is far rougher and tougher than the life he has left behind. Korean with Chinese subtitles.

**Where:** Room 501, fifth floor Hyundai Millennium Tower, 38 Xiaoyunlu, Chaoyang **When:** March 21, 5:30 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8453 8112



### Dig or Die

Directed by Ko Eun-ki, starring Jeong Wun-taek, Park Kwang-hyun, Park Ye-jin. Her father is a policeman, but his father is a thief. So though they fall love with each other, in the end they have to part company. However they must cooperate to steal 50 million won. Korean with Chinese subtitles.

**Where:** Room 501, fifth floor Hyundai Millennium Tower, 38 Xiaoyunlu, Chaoyang **When:** March 14, 5:30 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8453 8112

### Together

Directed by Chen Kaige, starring Liu Peiqi, Tang Yun, Chen Hong and Wang Zhiwen.

Liu Cheng, a cook, goes to Beijing with his son who is taking part in a national violin contest. The young boy's previously unquestioned values are turned inside-out by their neighbor, a charming woman named Li Li. His father forces him to shift to a new violin teacher, Professor Yu, whom the boy despises. However, under Professor Yu's instruction, he makes great progress. Before the contest, Professor Yu tells him a secret that will influence his life forever. Chinese with English subtitles.

**Where:** Cherry Lane Movies, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu **When:** March 14-15, 8 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 6430 1398 **Email:** rex@cherrylanemovies.com.cn

### Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress

Directed by Dai Sijie, starring Zhou Xun, Chen Kun, Liu Ye, Suang Baowang. A phenomenal success in France, this delightful little novella tells the story of two boys in China during the Cultural Revolution. Ma and Luo, two teenagers, considered as "bourgeois intellectuals" by the system, are sent to a small village in Sichuan to be "re-educated" by the local peasants. In this sinister period where the majority of books are prohibited and weddings before the age of 25 are illegal, Ma and Luo will clandestinely discover literature and love at the same time. In Chinese.

**Where:** Space for Imagination, 5 Xiwangzhuang Haidian **When:** March 15, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6279 1280

### II Trovatore (The Troubadour)

Directed by Antonio Garcia Gutierrez, starring Luciano Pavarotti. *II Trovatore* is the second opera of Giuseppe Verdi's popular one-two-three punch of *Rigoletto*, *II Trovatore* and *La Traviata*. The plot is based on the drama *El Trobador*. Conducted by James Levine, performed by the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. In Italian with English subtitles.

**Where:** Cultural Office of Italian Embassy **When:** March 20, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187

## Services

*Hiking around Beijing* is a guidebook which allows people who love hiking to explore the mountains of Beijing. This is a unique book which gives comprehensive descriptions and maps of 20 tried and tested hikes around the Beijing area. This is the first book of its kind in English. The book will be published in mid-April. Authors are Seema Bennett, Nicky Mason and Huilin Pinnegar. If any of you are interested in doing a book review, please get in touch with authors.

**Tel:** 13701 003694

## Exhibitions

### Maximalism Art Exhibition

This exhibition features over 100 works by Ding Yi, Li Huashen, Hong Hao and others. Curator Gao Minglu chose this name to reflect the "maximalized effort and process" that produced the works presented here. Hence Ding Yi's visually arresting matrix of paint dabs, Li Huashen's carefully forged contemporary brush works and Hong Hao's photos, featuring a surfeit of his personal items, photoshopped into one cluttered image.

**Where:** China Millennium Monument Art Museum, 9A Fuxing Lu, Haidian **When:** March 14-30, 8:30 am - 5:30 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 6852 7108, 6851 3322



Oil painting by Xiao Se

### Oil Painting Exhibition

This exhibition features recent works by Xiao Se, Liu Fengye, Xiao Hong and Yu Xiaodong. Yu Xiaodong has been living in Tibet for many years and his oil painting focuses on the local life and scenery. Xiao Hong's oil painting is based on historic peoples, expressing the relationship between history and modern times.

**Where:** Qin Gallery, Huaweili Enjoy Paradise1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City) Chaoyang **When:** March 15-31, 9:30 am - 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461



Painting by Jiang Chun

### Watercolor Exhibition

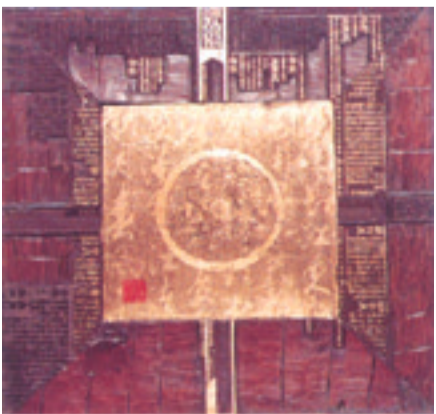
More than forty new and selected works by Jiang Chun, Huang Youwei and Yu Jiantao will be shown. Jiang Chun, chairman of Suzhou Fine Arts Association became famous in the early 90s. While visiting several European countries, he was deeply touched by the renaissance which has inspired much of his work.

**Where:** Wunfung Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie **When:** March 22 - April 8, 10 am - 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6523 3320

### Wash and Ink Exhibition

Chinese painters have always tried to breakthrough from the traditional ink and wash techniques and find other ways to use color. This exhibition shows how the study of traditional technique and modern aesthetics has shaped new Chinese artists.

**Where:** Creation Gallery, north end of Ritan Donglu **When:** till March 28, 10 am - 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8561 7570.



Calling by Xie Daren

### Lacquer Exhibition

Xie Daren has been painting on lacquer for 30 years. His paintings have been exhibited in Japan, France, America, Italy and Spain.

**Where:** Fa Fa Gallery, 2 Xiangjiang Beilu, Jingshun Lu, Qianfa Garden Clubhouse, Chaoyang **When:** March 16-31, 9 am - 10 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8430 2587

### Wu Guangzhong

Wu Guangzhong studied painting in Paris at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts. Known for his uncanny ability to draw out patterns in his subject matter, his abstract, multicolored oils are reminiscent of traditional brush work.

**Where:** Beijing New Millennium Art Gallery, Second Floor, Diyang Bulding, 2 Dong Sanhuan Bei Lu **When:** March 14, 9 am - 5:30 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8453 6193

### Pinhole Photography

Shi Guorui, from Shanxi Province, displays his stunning lunarscape images of the Great Wall, which have previously been exhibited at the Pingyao International Photography Festival. Hard to believe all it takes is a pin and a box.

**Where:** Chen Changfen Gallery, Room A211, 7 Wenjin Jie, Xicheng **When:** Monday - Friday, 9:30 am - 5 pm **Tel:** 13701 330506, 6612 6999

## Parties

### Mark up Party

This party features Disco music that were popular in US, during the 70s and 80s. Dress up and get on down to the grooves with Beijing's hottest DJs. Make-up artists, fashion advisors and disco divas will be on hand to help you with the authentic 70s & 80s look/dance. Come along and listen to real disco music, get the coolest look, wear the sexiest clothes and dance the way it should be done!

**Where:** Yan Club, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** March 29, 10 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan (includes transportation from and to Workers' Stadium) **Tel:** 8457 3506

## Sports

### Loop Walk

This loop walk offers great valley and ridge views. It follows a stream, passes three small villages and some remains of the great Wall. The top of the valley crosses the border of three counties (Changping, Yanqing and Huairou). This part of the Great Wall was not built with bricks but with rocks found nearby. There are small patches of farmland on the hilltop. It is impressive what local farmers can make out of small patches of land. The hike will follow one of the trails down a different valley, passing another neat little village and following part of an ancient trail back to the starting point.

**Where:** Huairou, north of Beijing **When:** March 16, meet 8:30 am outside Starbucks at Lido Hotel, or 9 am at Capital Paradise front gate, return 5 pm **Admission:** adults 150 yuan, children 100 yuan **Tel:** 13701 003694 **Email:** bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk

## Performance

### The Great man in the Common World (Shushi Qiren)

Performed by Drama Troupe of Kongzheng Song and Dance Troupe, directed by Wang Xiangming, starring Hong Jiantou, Liu Yajing, Lin Yongjian and Zhou Guiyuan. The story is based on a folk story set in Tianjing, following the lives of common people.

**Where:** Renyi Theatre **When:** till March 28, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7750 ext 198

## Music

### "Immortal Beethoven" Series IV

China Philharmonic Orchestra will perform *Beethoven's Egmont Overture*, *Piano Concerto No. 1* and *Symphony No. 1*. The pianist and conductor is Justus Frantz.

**Where:** Poly Theatre **When:** March 15, 9:30 pm **Admission:** 50-380 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7750 ext 198

### Yun di Li Piano Recital Concert

Talented young pianist Yun-di Li was awarded the Gold Medal of the International Chopin Piano Competition in 2000, becoming both the youngest winner and the first Chinese to receive this honor. The International Chopin Piano Competition is held every five years and there were no gold medals awarded in the previous two contests.

**Where:** Poly Theatre **When:** March 16, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 180-880 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7750 ext 198

### Piano Concert

Students from China Central Conservatory of Music who have won awards in nationwide piano competitions will perform the works of Chopin, Liszt, Tchaikovsky and other great composers.

**Where:** Concert Hall of National Library, Zhongguancun Nandajie **When:** March 16, 2:30 pm **Admission:** 10-30 yuan **Tel:** 8854 5731

### "My Friend" Solo Concert

Yuan Chenye has studied at the Central Conservatory of Music and Peabody Academy of Music in the US. He won many prizes in international music competitions and has toured all over Europe, Asia and America. He will perform Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Verdi's *Don Carlo* and other pieces. Accompanied by pianist Xu Hong.

**Where:** Concert Hall of National Library, Zhongguancun Nandajie **When:** March 15, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 50-260 yuan **Tel:** 8854 5731

### Italian Hit Parade

The Second Italian Contemporary Music Parade presents modern day compositions, organized by the Conservatory of Santa Cecilia in Rome.

**Where:** Central Conservatory of Music, 43 Baojiajie **When:** March 17-19, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Email:** italcul@public.bta.net.cn **Tel:** 6532 2187, 6642 5746



Qi Qin is a pop idols from Taiwan

### Qi Qin Concert

Qi Qin, whose pop songs made him one of the earliest pop idols from Taiwan, will play a concert in the capital. His two best known songs, *Perhaps in Winter* and *The Outside World* won Qi a loyal following when he first appeared on the scene in the mid-80s. The ever-green star's Beijing show will also feature the Beijing Symphony Orchestra.

**Where:** Capital Gymnasium, Baishiqiao Lu **When:** March 21, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 120-800 yuan **Tel:** 6833 5552

### Five Tenor Concert

Accompanied by the Symphony Orchestra of China National Opera and Dance Theatre, famous tenors Yu Jixing, Liu Weiwei, Du Jiegang, Li Honghui and Zhao Dengfeng will perform on the stage. The conductors are Gao Weichun and Zhu Xin. Pai Jieke from Phoenix TV will host this concert.

**Where:** Beijing Exhibition Theatre **When:** March 21, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-880 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7750 ext 508

## Lecture



### Traditional Language and Acting Performance

A lecture will be given on Qu Yi, traditional Chinese folk art with performances including cross talk and story telling to the accompaniment of traditional Chinese percussion and string instruments. English translation provided.

**Where:** Lee's Antique Carpets, Liangmaqiao Lu, close to 21st Century Hotel **When:** March 16, 2:30-4:30 pm **Admission:** adults 50 yuan, students 40 yuan **Tel:** 8851 4913

## Activities

### The 10th Annual Irish Ball

The original and best, just in time for St Patrick's Day. This year's event will be held at the Great Wall Sheraton.

**Where:** Great Wall Sheraton **When:** March 15 **Admission:** 800 yuan **Tel:** 13910 874610 **Email:** kthomas124@hotmail.com

## Language Exchange

A Chinese girl, with a bachelor degree and good experience in architecture, computer animation and web design, wants native English speakers to communicate and tour the city with freely.

**Tel:** 13011 833274

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language exchange and accommodation info for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtodayinfo@ynet.com or call 6590 2522

By Guo Yuandan



Photos by Fu Xing / Bobby

By Jerry Ho  
Xijiaomin Xiang (西交民巷) was known as “bankers’ street” at the turn of the Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China. In 1905, the Qing government’s Ministry Of Revenue and Population established in the street China’s first national bank — the Bank of the Ministry of Revenue and Population.

Three years later, the bank changed its name to the Bank of the Great Qing, with a subsidiary savings bank and 35 branches nationwide. After the founding of the Republic of China, it became the Bank of China.

Also in 1908, the Qing government established the Bank of Communications to redeem ownership of the Beijing-Wuhan Railway and to handle revenue from railways, telegraph, post and shipping. The headquarters of the two banks later moved to Shanghai, with the Beijing sites being relegated to branch office status.

The Central Bank of China was founded by the Republic of China government in 1927, with its headquarters in the then capital, Nanjing. A Beijing branch was opened in Xijiaomin Xiang in the same year.

Other banks, both privately owned and joint ventures with foreign banks, were also established here, including Beiyang Baoshang Bank (北洋保商银行 1910), Commercial Savings Bank of Shanghai (1915), Pingfu (平孚) Bank (1917), the Commercial Bank of Peking (1918) and the Agricultural and Industrial Bank of China.

Among these, the most important were Jincheng (金城) Bank and Continent Bank, headquartered in Tianjin. The Jincheng Bank was founded in 1917 and was once China’s biggest commercial bank. The Continent Bank was founded in 1919 by two warlords.

In 1922, the two banks, together two other banks — Yanye (Salt Industry) Bank and Zhongnan (Central-South) Bank, engaged in a



Inscriptions by Qing Emperors

series of joint undertakings together, including establishing joint business offices, setting up a savings association and creating a joint cash reserve. In 1952, the four banks were merged with the United Bank and several smaller banks to form the Gongsì Heying Bank (公私合营银行).

#### Historic Sites

There remain in Xijiaomin Xiang the sites of four former banks and one residence that are considered historically valuable and are specially protected by the municipal government.

① **Continent Bank:** Located at the eastern end of the street, the six-story British style building belonged to the Beijing branch of the Continent Bank. The facade is in western classical style and the base is made of granite bricks. The main door is elaborately decorated. The building is crowned with a bell tower, with clocks on all four sides, atop a hemispherical dome made of iron. It is considered one of China’s finest examples of western style architecture of the period. The building is now occupied by the Qianmen Branch of the Bank of China.

② **Beiyang Baoshang Bank:** Located to the east of Continent Bank, the building is now occupied by the China Numismatic Museum. Four huge pillars stand at the front of the building. The museum is open to the public from 9 am to 4 pm Tuesday to Sunday. Admission is 5 yuan.

③ **Beijing Branch of The Central Bank:** Located just to the west of Beiyang Baoshang Bank, 17 Xijiaomin Xiang is now used by the Finance Publishing House. It is similar in style to the Continent Bank and Beiyang Baoshang Bank.

④ **Agricultural and Industrial Bank of China:** Built in 1922, 50 Xijiaomin Xiang is now occupied by the National Press Workers Association of China.

**Residence of Zhang Tingge:** 87 Xijiaomin Xiang is the former residence of Zhang Tingge, founder of Shuanghesheng Lager Brewery. It was originally divided into two sections. The eastern section was a courtyard containing sculptures from the old imperial garden, Yuanmingyuan. The western part featured a garden with rockworks, pavilions and fountains. There are inscriptions by Qing emperors Qianlong and Jiaqing on white marble over the rockworks. Buildings of the old residence are well maintained. It is now divided into three courtyards, all inhabited by local Beijingers.



The Industrial and Commercial Bank now occupies this historic building

#### WALL WALKS

## Huanghuacheng Great Wall

By Lisa Huang

During summer, the countryside around Huanghuacheng Great Wall (黄花城长城) is swathed in yellow, as masses of wild flowers come into bloom.

Huanghuacheng (Yellow Flower City) Great Wall, 60 kilometers north east of Beijing is almost 11 kilometers long. It joins with Mutianyu Great Wall in the east, and Juyongguan Pass and Badaling in the west.

Early in the Yuan Dynasty, the area was dotted with prosperous villages, then during the Ming Dynasty, a town was established at the strategically important Benzheguan Pass.

Construction of Huanghuacheng Great Wall began in 1575, during the Ming Dynasty, under the supervision of General Cai Kai. It took the fastidious Cai many years to finish the project, but when he returned to the capital to report the completion of his task, he was promptly beheaded. Scheming ministers had told Emperor Wanli that the workmanship Cai oversaw was slipshod and lackadaisical. The emperor was so enraged by these scurrilous reports, he ordered Cai’s immediate execution.

It later occurred to the emperor that an investigation might be in order, so he sent a trusted aid to survey Cai’s wall. The aid reported back that Huanghuacheng Great Wall was solid, steep and exemplified the finest workmanship. Realizing he had been perhaps a little hasty in condemning Cai to death, Wanli ordered a tomb and memorial stele to be erected in honor of the loyal general.

He also had the characters “Jin Tang” (金汤), meaning firm, stable, inscribed on the face of a huge rock below the wall, so there should be no further doubt, which explains why the wall is also known as Jintang Great Wall.

There is a lake and a reservoir nearby. The crescent shaped reservoir is called Huanghuacheng Reservoir, while the name of the lake is Jintang. The water of the lake is cold



and clear, and it is fed by numerous springs. A sluice gate has been built on Jintang Lake, over which water flows in the summer.

Parts of Huanghuacheng Great Wall were destroyed and fell into Jintang Lake after being bombed during the Japanese invasion of China half a century ago.

The entire section of wall comprises of six forts, six passes, twelve beacon-towers, and thirty-two guard towers. Among them, Yaoziyu Fort (鹞子峪城堡) is the best preserved. Covering an area of 7,000 square meters, it was built in 1592. There is a scholar tree standing in the castle courtyard that was planted in that same year.

The steepest section of Huanghuacheng Great Wall is known as Shibadeng (十八蹬), and requires special care when climbing, especially after rain.

**Getting there:** Setting out from Madian Qiao on the third ring road, take the Beijing-Changping road as far as the Changping Xiguan Huan-dao (昌平西关环岛) exit. Drive north along Highway 101 until you reach a T intersection, and turn left. At the end of this road, you will see the Great Wall to your right. An alternative is to take long distance bus 916 from Dongzhimen bus station and get off at Huairou (8 yuan), then change to bus 961 to Huanghuacheng (2.5 yuan).

**Tips:** March to October is the best time to visit. In midsummer, masses of yellow flowers cover the surrounding hills and valleys.

#### MUSEUM WATCH

## Classic Furniture

By Guo Yuanfan

The Guanfu Classic Art Museum (观复古典艺术博物馆) is more like an art gallery than a museum, holding exhibitions along different themes throughout the year. The current exhibition features antique furniture of the Ming and Qing dynasties.

Founder and curator of the museum Ma Weidu, is a well-known connoisseur and collector. He focuses on the connection between people and history, emphasizing traditional culture. Ma describes traditional furniture as expressing the living idea of Chinese. In ancient times, comfort was not a key consideration for furniture designers. More attention was paid to symmetry, quality of materials and delicacy of the craft.

The pieces in this exhibition are classified into six categories; country style furniture (soft wood), redwood (hongmu), lacquer (qimu), chicken-wing wood (jichimu), huanghuali, and red sandalwood style furniture. They include armchairs, stools, tables, cabinets, beds and mirrors.

Guanfu Classic Art Museum, which opened in 1997, is one of the first privately owned museums in China. The exhibits are all clearly labeled in both Chinese and English, and there is an English speaking guide on hand.

A small courtyard, hidden behind an old wooden door from Shanxi, offers a peaceful setting for a quiet cup of tea. There are zhentoudu, embroidered pillowcases from Shanxi on display and for sale here.

**Where:** Basement of Huazhi Office Building (华智商务大厦), Nanzhuguan Hutong (南竹竿胡同), Chaoyangmennei Nanxiaojie

**Admission:** 20 yuan  
**Tel:** 6523 1556 ext 111



Qing Dynasty shrine



Ming Dynasty folding chair

Photos by Cui Hao